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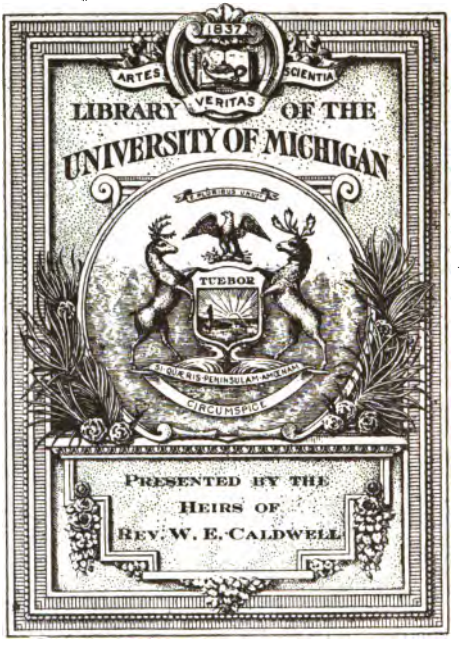

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CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

A SERMON

ON

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM,

WITH MANY QUOTATIONS FROM PEDOBAPTIST AUTHORS.
TO WHICH ARE ADDED A LETTER TO THE CHURCH
IN PLYMOUTH, MASS., AND AN ADDRESS ON
THE MODE OF BAPTIZING.

BY

ADONIRAM JUDSON, JUN. A. M.

FIFTH AMERICAN EDITION.
REVISED AND ENLARGED BY THE AUTHOR.

BOSTON:
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03-16-37 J.A.

PREFACE

TO THE

INDIA EDITION.

THE author of the following discourse was, by education and profession, a Pedobaptist. During his passage from America to India, in the spring of 1812, he began to doubt the truth of his former sentiments. After his arrival in this country, and before he communicated the exercises of his mind to any of the Baptist denomination, he became convinced, that the immersion of a professing believer, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is the only Christian Baptism.

This discourse exhibits the reasons of his present belief. It was preached in Calcutta on Lord's day, Sept. 27th, 1812, previous to the administration of the ordinance of baptism, and is now committed to the press, in compliance with the request of some who heard it, and from a desire to furnish his distant friends in America, with a more full and satisfactory statement of the reasons of his change, than could be made in private communications.

N. B. For many of the testimonies, inserted in this discourse, the author acknowledges himself indebted to MR Booth's *Pedobaptism Examined.*

CALCUTTA, *Nov.* 1812.

PREFACE

TO THE

FOURTH AMERICAN EDITION.

THE author has spared a few days from his missionary work, in revising this discourse for a new edition.

He feels much satisfaction, in finding, that, through the lapse of seven years, the authenticity and correctness of the numerous testimonies adduced, have not been questioned in a single instance.

He wishes also to say, that after having seen and heard much that has been urged, both in India and America, against his statements, he sincerely thinks, that not one has been disproved, except that concerning persons born of Christian parents, and not baptized till adult age. Finding himself mistaken, in the case of Augustine, he has now suppressed the whole paragraph, not because he doubts that there are such cases on record, but because his present situation deprives him of the means of authenticating them to satisfaction.

RANGOON, *Nov.* 1819.

SERMON.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19.

BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST.

WHEN our Lord commissioned his disciples to proselyte all nations, he instituted the sacred ordinance of baptism.

The words of the institution suggest two inquiries: *What is baptism?* and, *To whom is baptism to be administered?*

1. *What is baptism?*

Had the Greek word, which denotes the act of baptizing, been translated, in the English version of the New Testament, there would probably have been, among English readers, no dispute concerning its import. Had either of the English words, *wash*, or *sprinkle*, or *immerse*, been substituted for the Greek word, an English reader would instantly conceive an appropriate meaning. But, unhappily, our translators have retained the original word, and contented themselves with merely changing its termination. Thus, an English reader is deprived of his usual guide. There are no other applications of the word, in his own language, from which he can learn its import. The only expedient, therefore, of

which he can avail himself, is to ascertain the import of the original word: and to this end, the following considerations may conduce.

1. The primitive word (*βάπτω*,) from which the word denoting baptism, is derived, signifies *immersion*. This, with the general consent of the Pedobaptists themselves, is as much the appropriate meaning of the Greek word, as of the English word, *dip* or *immerse*.* This is the word used in the New Testament, when the rich man entreats, that Lazarus may be sent to *dip* the tip of his finger in water: † when Christ says, 'He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have *dipped* it;' ‡ and when, in the Revelation, Christ is represented, as clothed with a vesture *dipped* in blood. ‖ The inspired penmen have used no other word, beside this and its derivatives, to convey the idea of immersion; nor have they ever used this word in any other sense.

The word denoting baptism (*βαπτιζω*,) is derived from the *verbal* of this primitive word (*βάπτος*,) by a change in the termination, which, according to an established principle in the Greek language, never affects the primary idea; but when made on words, expressing a quality or attribute, merely conveys the additional idea of *causing* or *making*.

Thus the Greek word, which signifies *pure*, with this change of termination, signifies *to make pure*.

*Dr. Worcester. 'Had it been the intention of the Saviour,' to confine his followers to dipping or immersion, the proper word to express this ordinance, would have been, not *βαπτίζω*, but *βάπτω*.' *Letters to Dr. Baldwin*, Let. xxii. p 125.

Mr. Buck. 'They,' (the Pedobaptists,) 'believe, that the word *βάπτω*, signifies to dip or to plunge; but that the term *βαπτίζω*, which is only a derivative of *βάπτω*,' &c. *Theol. Dict. Art. Bapt.*

† Luke xvi. 24. ‡ John xiii. 26. ‖ Rev. xix. 13

The Greek word, which signifies *sprinkled*, with this change of termination, signifies *to make sprinkled*, or *to sprinkle*. And the Greek word, which signifies *immersed*, with this change of termination, signifies *to make immersed*, or *to immerse*.*

Accordingly, that eminent Greek critic, Dr. Campbell, expressly pronounces the primitive and the derivative to be synonymous. †

2. The word which denotes the act of baptizing, according to the usage of Greek writers, uniformly signifies or implies *immersion*. ‡

It is the word used in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, to express the action of Naaman, when he *dipped* himself seven times in Jordan. ‡ It is the word used by Josephus, to convey the idea

* There is no position more frequently maintained by modern Pedobaptist writers, than that βάπτιζω is a diminutive of βάπτω. But there is certainly no position more untenable, and more perfectly destitute of all support from standard philologists and Greek classics. The termination ιζω, in Greek derivatives, is of the same import, as the termination *fy*, in English derivatives, from the Latin *fio, to make*; as, sanctify, *to make holy*, from sanctus, *holy*; mollify, *to soften*, from mollis, *soft*, &c. Thus, ἁγνιζω, *to purify*, from ἁγνὸς, *pure*; σοφίζω, *to make wise*, from σοφὸς, *wise*; χεμίζω, *to fill*, from γέμω, *to be full*, &c. And derivatives are thus formed, not only from adjectives and neuter verbs, but also from the verbals of transitive verbs; as, αἱρέω, *to choose*; αἱρετὸς, *chosen*; αἱρετίζω, *to make chosen, to choose*; ἐμφαίνω, *to show*; ἐμφανὴς, *shown*; ἐμφανίζω, *to make shown, to show*; καθαίρω, *to cleanse*; καθαρὸς, *clean*; καθαριζω, *to make clean, to cleanse*; ῥαίνω, *to sprinkle*; ῥαντὸς, *sprinkled*; ζαντίζω, *to make sprinkled, to sprinkle*. And according to the same analogy; βάπτω, *to immerse*; βαπτὸς, *immersed*; βαπτίζω, *to make immersed, to immerse*. It follows, therefore, that verbs in ιζω, derived from the verbals of transitive verbs, are, with scarcely any exceptions, of the same import as their roots.

† *Four Gospels*, Note on Matt. xx. 22. See also, to the same purpose Beckmannus, *Exercit. Theolog.* Ex. xvii. p. 257; Burmannus, *Synops. Theolog.* Loc. xliii. c. vi. § 2; Suicerus, *Thesaur. Eccles.* sub voce βάπτισμα; Turrettinus, Institut. Loc. xix. Quæst. xi. § 4; Heideggerus. *Corpus. Theolog. Christ.* Loc. xxv. § 21.

‡ 2 Kings v. 14.

of immersion; in describing the death of one, who was drowned in a pool, by order of Herod;* and by the same author, in instances too numerous to be detailed. †

It is the word used by Porphyry, in mentioning a river, in which an offender on entering, is immediately immersed up to the head. ‡ Numerous instances may be produced from other Greek authors, to confirm this signification. §

Nor has any instance been produced in which the word, literally applied, does not denote *immersion*, or *washing* by *immersion*. In figurative applications, this word, like the English words *dip* and *immerse*, and like all other words, is probably used with some freedom. But should a few instances of this kind be found, would they be sufficient to invalidate the force of evidence resulting from the proper and general use of the word? What law will bind a subject, if he is at liberty to depart from the prop-

* *Antiq. Jud.* L. xv. C. iii. § 3.

† *Antiq. Jud.* L. iv. C. iv. § 6; *De Bell. Jud.* L. iv. C. iii. § 3; *Vita*, § 3; and as quoted by Dr. D. Scott, L. i. C. xxii. § 2; L. i. C. xxvii. § i; L. ii. C. xviii. § 4; L. ii. C. xx. § 1; L. iii. C. ix. § 3; L. iii. C. x. § 9.

‡ *De Styge*, p. 282. In regard to this and similar instances, which are sometimes adduced, by Pedobaptist writers, it is to be observed, that the word βαπτίζω conveys the simple idea of immersion, whether partial or total. Restricting clauses may teach us, that it is partial; the absence of such clauses, and perhaps collateral circumstances, may teach us that it is total. If Christ had commanded his disciples to be immersed up to the head, he would have commanded a partial immersion; but since he has commanded them to be immersed, without adding any restricting clause, we infer the necessity of total immersion. The same is inferrible from other circumstances. See the first quotation from Dr. Wall, under the eighth particular of the 1st part.

§ Strabo, L. vi. p. 84; L. xii. p. 391; L. xiv. p. 458; Dio, xxxvii. p. 64; xxxviii. p. 84; l. p. 492; Polyb. L. iii. C. lxxii; L. v. C. xlvii; Pluiarch, *De Superstit.* Tom. ii. Op. f. 166; Diodorus Siculus, L. i. C. xxxvi. L. i. C. lxxiii; L. xvi. C. lxxx; Heliodorus, L. v. 197; Æschylus, *Prometh. Vinct.* p. 53; Arist. *de Mirab. Auscult.* p. 87.

er and general interpretation of the principal term, and affix to it a signification, which is drawn from some rare figurative application? Had the rite of baptism been prescribed in the English language, and the word *dip* been used to express the act, could we have entertained a doubt concerning the meaning? And in what light should we regard an attempt to prove, that it has no definite import, but signifies sprinkling, or any kind of wetting, because Dr. Johnson defines the word, 1. *To immerse;* 2. *To moisten, to wet*; and in proof of the latter meaning cites these lines of Milton:

> 'And tho' not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
> *Dips* me all over?'*

If this principle of interpretation be allowed, it will destroy the force of every command.

That immersion is the *native* and *proper* signification of the word βαπτιζω, is so universally asserted by all lexicographers and critics, that no one scarcely presumes to deny it; and to attempt to prove this point, by citing authorities, would be quite preposterous. †

That immersion is the *exclusive* signification of the word, appears from the following testimonies of eminent Pedobaptist authors, whose concessions on this subject could not have been affected by Baptist

* This figurative application of the word *dip*, finely illustrates the application of the word βαπτω in the Septuagint translation of the prophecy of Daniel, where it is said, that the body of Nebuchadnezzar was dipt in the dew of heaven.

† But as a specimen, See Valesius, *Annot.* in Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* L. vi. C. xliii. p. 120; Leigh, *Critica Sacra*, sub voce; Calvin, *Instit.* L. iv. C. xv. § 19; Witsius, *Œcon. Fœd.* L. iv. C. xvi. § 13.

partialities, but must have resulted from a conviction of truth alone. *

BUDDÆUS. 'The words *βαπτίζειν* and *βαπτισμὸς* are not to be interpreted of aspersion, but *always* of immersion.' †

ALSTEDIUS. '*βαπτίζειν*, *to baptize*, signifies *only* to immerse, not wash, except by consequence.' ‡

J. J. WETSTENIUS. 'To baptize is to plunge, to dip. The body, or part of the body, *being under water*, is said to be baptized.' §

J. ALTINGIUS. 'For baptism is immersion, when the whole body is immerged; but the term baptism is *never* used concerning aspersion.' ||

BEZA. 'Christ commanded us to be baptized, by which word, it is certain, immersion is signified. Nor does *βαπτίζειν* signify to wash, except by consequence; for it properly signifies to immerse for the sake of dyeing. To be baptized in water, signifies *no other*, than to be immersed in water, which is the external ceremony of baptism.' ¶

LUTHER. 'The term *baptism* is a Greek word. It may be rendered immersion, as when we plunge something in water, that it may be entirely covered with water. And though that custom is now abolished among the generality, (for even children are not entirely immersed, but only have a little water

* If it be asked why these learned men still practised pouring or sprinkling, one of their number shall inform us: CALVIN. 'It is certain, that we want nothing which maketh to the substance of baptism. Wherefore, the church did grant herself liberty, since the beginning, to change the rites somewhat, except the substance.' Comment. in Acts viii. 38, in Baldwin's *Series of Letters*, p. 201.

† *Theolog. Dogmat.* L. v. C. i. § 5. ‡ *Lexicon Theolog.* C. xii. p. 221.
§ *Comment.* ad Matt. iii. 6. || *Comment.* ad Heb. ix. 10.
¶ *Epist.* ii. *ad. Thom. Tilium. Annot.* in Marc. vii. 4, and Act. xix. 3.

poured on them;) nevertheless, they ought to be completely immersed, and immediately drawn out. *For the etymology of the word evidently requires it.*' *

CASAUBON. 'This was the rite of baptizing, that persons were plunged into the water; *which the very word βαπτιζειν, to baptize, sufficiently declares.*' †

CATTENBURGH. 'In baptism the whole body is ordered to be immersed.' ‡

KECKERMANNUS. 'We cannot deny, that the first institution of baptism consisted in immersion, and not sprinkling.' §

SALMASIUS. || 'Thus Novatian, when sick, received baptism, being *περιχυθεις, sprinkled*, not *βαπτισθεις, baptized.* Euseb. vi. Hist. C. xliii.' ¶

DR. CAMPBELL. The word *βαπτιζειν*, both in sacred authors, and in classical, signifies *to dip, to plunge, to immerse;* and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dyeing cloth, which was by immersion. *It is always construed suitably to this meaning.* Thus it is *εν υδατι, εν τω Ιορδανῃ.* But I should not lay much stress on the preposition *εν*, which, answering to the Hebrew ב, may denote *with*, as well as *in*, did not the whole phraseology, in regard to this ceremony, concur in evincing the same thing.—Had *βαπτιζω* been here employed in the sense of *ῥαινω, I sprinkle*, (*which, as far as I know, it never is, in any use, sacred or classical,*) the expression would doubtless

* *Opera*, Tom. i. p. 72. Wit. 1582. † *Annot.* in Matt. iii. 6.
‡ *Spicileg. Theolog.* L. iv. C. lxiv. Sect. ii. § 22.
§ *System. Theolog.* L. iii. C. viii. p. 369.
|| DR. JOHNSON. 'Salmasius was a man of skill in languages, knowledge of antiquity, and sagacity of emendatory criticism, almost exceeding all hope of human attainment. *Life of Milton*, p. 75.
¶ Apud Witsii *Æcon. Fœd.* L. iv. C. xvi. § 13.

have been,' &c. *—'When, therefore, the Greek word βαπτίζω is adopted, I may say, rather than translated into modern languages, the mode of construction ought to be preserved, so far as may conduce to suggest its original import. It is to be regretted, that we have so much evidence, that even good and learned men allow their judgments to be warped, by the sentiments and customs of the sect which they prefer. The true partizan of whatever denomination, always inclines to correct the diction of the Spirit, by that of the party.' †

3. There are no instances, in the New Testament which require us to depart from the *etymological* and *established* interpretation of the word.

We must believe, that the writers of the New Testament used words according to their usual acceptation, in the Greek language, unless the connexion requires some other interpretation. If we suppose, that they used words in a manner different from common, established use, without giving sufficient intimation, either expressly or by the obvious scope of the passage, we must give up our only guide to the meaning of any word, or charge them with a design of misleading. They certainly knew that their readers would naturally and necessarily interpret every word in the usual way, unless taught differently by the connexion.

* The two verbs, rendered *wash*, in the English translation, are different in the original. The first is νιψωνται, properly translated *wash;* the second is βαπτισωνται, *which limits us to a particular mode of washing;* for βαπτίζω denotes *to plunge, to dip.*—'βαπτιζεσθαι,' says that excellent critic (Wetstein) 'est manus aquæ immergere, νιπτεσθαι, manibus affundere. *Note* on Mark vii. 3, 4.

† *Four Gospels*, Note on Matt. iii. 11.

Let us examine those instances, in which it has been supposed, that the connexion renders the idea of immersion inadmissible.

It is said, that we cannot suppose, that the washings (according to the Greek, *baptisms*) of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables, or those ablutions which the Jews practised before eating, were all done by immersion.*

With regard to the former, it must be remembered, that the Jews were commanded, in their law, to cleanse unclean vessels by immersing them; 'whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, *it must be put into water.*' † What is more probable, than that they abused the first institution of this ceremony, by superstitiously immersing a variety of articles not included in the divine command?

That the Jews, on returning from market, immersed themselves before eating, may appear improbable to an inhabitant of the north of Europe or America; but not to you, my brethren, who are acquainted with the customs of these eastern countries, and witness the frequent ceremonial immersion of the natives.

But that these baptisms were really immersions, and, therefore, that the use of the word, in these instances, instead of weakening, must confirm the belief, that it always means immersion, appears from the following testimonies.

GROTIUS. 'They cleansed themselves from defilement, contracted in the market, not by washing

* Mark vii. 3, 4. † Lev. xi. 32.

the hands merely, but by immersing the body.'*

SCALIGER. 'The more superstitious part of them,' (the Jews,) 'every day, before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body. Hence the Pharisee's admiration at Christ, Luke xi. 38.'†

RABBI MAIMONIDES. 'Wherever in the law, washing of the flesh, or of the clothes is mentioned, it means nothing else, than the dipping of the whole body in a laver; for if any man dips himself all over, except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness.'‡

'A bed that is wholly defiled, if a man dips it part by part, it is pure.'§

It is said, that the three thousand, converted on the day of Pentecost,‖ could not have been baptized by immersion the same day.

Admitting that they were all baptized the same day, which, however, is not asserted, it remains to be proved, that the twelve apostles were not assisted by others. In the preceding chapter, we are informed that the number of disciples together, was one hundred and twenty, among whom were doubtless many of the seventy, appointed by Christ himself. And after it is proved, that the twelve apostles were alone concerned in administering the ordinance, the expedition with which some modern baptisms of large numbers have been actually performed, relieves the subject from all possible difficulty.

* *Annot.* in Mark vii. 3, 4. † *De Emend. Templ.* L. vi. p. 771.
‡ *Hilchot. Mikvaot.* C. i. Sect. ii.
§ *Hilchot. Celim.* C. xxvi. Sect. xiv. See also to the same purpose, IKENIUS, *Antiq. Hebraicæ*, Pars i. C. xviii. § 9, and STACKHOUSE. *Hist. of the Bible*, B. viii. C. i. p. 1234.
‖ Acts ii. 41.

Another objection is thus stated: 'At dead of night, in the city of Philippi, the *jailer and all his* were baptized by Paul and Silas.* Is it to be believed, that, in a city guarded by Roman sentinels, the *prisoners*, Paul and Silas, when their jailer had received a strict charge, at his peril, to keep them safely, would, nevertheless, take him and his family abroad, in the night, just after the whole city had been roused by an earthquake, and go to a pond, or a river, to baptise them by immersion?'†

This case can present no difficulty to the minds of any of you, my brethren, who may have been within the yard of the prison in this city, or are acquainted with the fact, that prison yards, in the east, as well as the yards and gardens of private houses, are usually furnished with tanks of water.

It is said again, with reference to the rites of cleansing, under the Jewish dispensation, that, 'by the apostle to the Hebrews,‡ these various purifications, or *sprinklings*, are expressly called (*διαφοροις βαπτισμοις*) *diverse baptisms*.'§

This might be urged with some plausibility, had no immersions been prescribed in the Jewish ritual. But since these were numerous, as will appear, on examining the Levitical law,‖ the application of the word, by the apostle Paul, affords no reason for ascribing to it any other, beside its usual import.¶

Another instance, supposed to be objectionable,

* Acts xvi. 23—34.

† Dr. Worcester's *Letters to Dr. Baldwin*. Lett. xxii. p. 127.

‡ Heb. ix. 10.

§ Dr. Worcester's *Letters to Dr. Baldwin*, Lett. xxii. p. 128.

‖ See, among other instances, Lev. xv. xvi. 26. 28. Num. xix. 7, 8.

¶ J. Altingius. 'Washings, the Apostle calls diverse baptisms; that is, various immersions. Those Jewish washings were manifold.' *Comment.* ad Heb. ix. 10.

may be thus stated. Christ promised to baptize his disciples with the Holy Spirit;* and on the day of Pentecost, fulfilled his promise by *pouring out* the Spirit upon them.† Here, it is said, the pouring out of the Spirit is compatible with the supposition, that sprinkling or pouring is baptism, but not with the supposition, that immersion only is baptism.

This objection derives all its force, from the erroneous supposition that the baptism of the disciples consisted in having the Spirit poured out upon them. But if the pouring out of the Spirit proves that pouring is baptism, their being filled with the Spirit proves that filling is baptism.

The truth is, that the pouring out of the Spirit was merely the means by which they became baptized or immersed in the Spirit. The Spirit was poured out to such a degree, that the promise of Christ was accomplished, and they were immersed, yea, filled with the Spirit. In confirmation of this interpretation, the miraculous wind, the symbol of the Holy Spirit, is represented as *filling all the house where they were sitting.*'‡

It is true, that, on this interpretation, there is no literal immersion; but since the representation is figurative, we ought not to expect a perfect resem-

* Acts i. 5. † Acts. ii. 1—4 and 33.

‡ Apb. TILLOTSON. '*It filled all the house.* This is that which our Saviour calls *baptizing with the Holy Ghost.* So that they, who sat in the house, were, as it were, *immersed* in the Holy Ghost, as they who were buried with water, were overwhelmed, or covered all over with water, which is the proper notion of baptism. *Sermons*, Serm. CXCVII. See also, to the same purpose, CYRIL, *Catech.* XVII. § 8. 10; GURTLERUS, *Institut. Theolog.* C. XXXIII; IKENIUS, *Dissert. Philolog. Theolog.* Dissert. XIX. p. 325; LE CLERC, *Remarques sur Nouv. Test.* a Matt. iii. 1; CASAUBON, in Act. i. 5; LEIGH, *Annot.* on Matt. iii. 11; Bp. HOPKINS, *Works*, p. 519; Bp. REYNOLDS, *Works*, p. 226.

blance in all points, but such a resemblance only, as will justify the figurative application.

The same remark is applicable to the baptism of the Israelites, in the cloud, and in the sea, * which has been thought incompatible with the idea of immersion.

The apostle, in the context, informs us *how* they were baptized, not by being sprinkled or washed, but *by being under the cloud, and by passing through the sea.* Is there any impropriety in representing their situation, with the sea on each side, and the cloud covering them, as an immersion in the cloud, and in the sea? Is not this the natural, obvious import of the passage? As to the supposition, that they were sprinkled with spray from the sea, and rain from the cloud, it is made without evidence (the eighth and ninth verses of the sixty-eighth Psalm, not alluding to this event †), and appears too fanciful, and too evidently contrived to serve a turn, to require further remark. ‡

We have now considered the principal instances, in the New Testament, which have been thought to attach some other idea, beside that of immersion, to the term denoting baptism; and certainly discover

* 1 Cor. x. 1. 2. † See Dr. TH. SCOTT's *Notes* on Ps. lxviii 9.

‡ WITSIUS. 'How were the Israelites baptized in the cloud, and in the sea, seeing they were neither immersed in the sea, nor wet by the cloud? It is to be considered, that the apostle here uses the term baptism in a figurative sense. — The cloud hung over their heads; and so the water is over those that are baptized. — The sea surrounded them on each side; and so the water in regard to those that are baptized. *Œcon. Fœd.* L. iv. C. x. § 11. See also, to the same purpose, TURRETTINUS, *Disput. de Bap. Nubis et Maris*, § 24; Sir NORTON KNATCHBULL, *Animad. in Lib. Nov. Test.* ad 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21; VENEMA, *Dissert. Sac.* L. ii. C. xiv. § 9—11; GROTIUS, in 1 Cor. x. 2; BRAUNIUS, *Doctrina Fœd.* Loc. xviii. C. x. § 7; Mr. GATAKER, *Adversar. Miscel.* Cap. iv. CAMERO, in loc. BENGELIUS, *Gnomon*, in loc. MARCKIUS. *Bib. Exercitat.* Ex. viii. § 12; POOL's Continuators; Dr. HAMMOND and Dr. WHITBY, on the place.

no sufficient reason, for departing from the etymological and established interpretation.

4. The places chosen for the administration of the ordinance, and the circumstances attending those instances, in which the act of baptizing is particularly described, in the New Testament, plainly indicate *immersion.*

John baptized *in the river Jordan,* * and in Enon, *because there was much water there.* † Christ was baptized *in Jordan,* and after the ordinance, *came up out of the water.* ‡ Philip and the eunuch *went down both into the water,* and after baptism, *came up out of the water.* § The phrase, *went into the water,* does not, indeed, imply *in itself,* that the subjects were immersed. It is one thing, to go into the water; and it is another thing, to be immersed. But the phrase implies *by consequence,* that the subjects were immersed. For it cannot be supposed, that John and the primitive disciples resorted to rivers, and went into the water, for the purpose of pouring or sprinkling. Do the advocates of pouring or sprinkling find this the most convenient mode of administering the ordinance?

5. Baptism is, by the apostle Paul, repeatedly compared to a burial. In one passage, believers are said *to be buried with Christ by baptism,* ‖ and in another, *to be buried with him in baptism, and to be therein risen with him.* ¶

Whether baptism, in these passages, denotes external or spiritual baptism, it is evident, that the figure derives all its propriety and beauty from some

* Mark i. 5. † John iii. 23. ‡ Mark i. 9, 10. § Acts viii. 38, 39.
‖ Rom. vi. 4. ¶ Col. ii. 12.

implied resemblance between the external rite and a burial; nor can it be imagined, that the apostle would have ever compared baptism of any kind to a burial, had there been no such resemblance.

When we are said to be spiritually circumcised, *in putting off* the body of the sins of the flesh,* there is an evident allusion to the nature of the external right of circumcision; and the propriety of the figure depends solely on the resemblance which can be traced, between the external rite and the spiritual operation.

When Paul was exhorted to be baptized, and to *wash away* his sins,† there was an evident allusion to the use of water, in the ordinance of baptism; and had there been no application of water on which to ground such an allusion, we may be certain that we should never have heard of washing away sins in baptism.

Accordingly, none are ever said to be washed in circumcision, because there is no resemblance between that rite and washing. So also, though we are said, in a spiritual sense, to be crucified with Christ, we are not said to be crucified with him in baptism or circumcision, because there is no resemblance between those rites and crucifixion.‡

Nor are we ever said to be buried in circumcis-

* Col. ii. 11. † Acts xxii. 16.

‡ But though the apostle does not say expressly, that we are crucified in baptism, does he not say this implicitly? He says, that we are baptized into the death of Christ; and in the context, that we are buried with him by baptism into death, and also that our old man is crucified with him. Does he not, therefore, virtually say, that we are crucified in baptism?

It must be admitted, that, if it is good reasoning *to infer figures*, we can doubtless make out the absurdity of baptismal crucifixion. But on the same principle we can make the inspired writers answerable for the most incongruous and grotesque figures, that the wildest im-

ion, or to be risen therein to newness of life. Such expressions would be highly improper and absurd; because there is nothing like a burial or a resurrection in the rite of circumcision.

For the same reason, we may rest assured, that if baptism had consisted in sprinkling or pouring, or any partial application of water whatever, though we might possibly have heard of being washed in baptism, we should never have heard of being buried in baptism; for there being no resemblance, between such applications of water and a burial, there could have been no propriety in representing baptism under such a figure.

But there is a confessed resemblance between immersion and a burial; and since the phrase, *buried in baptism*, is sanctioned by the highest authority, even divine inspiration, we have invincible proof, that baptism consists not in sprinkling or pouring, but in immersion.

6. The idea of immersion is the only one, which will suit all the various connexions, in which the word is used in the New Testament.

The word certainly has some meaning, whether more limited, or more general; and when used to denote the ordinance of baptism, certainly has one uniform meaning, which is applicable in every instance. What is this meaning?

Is it *sprinkling*? We must then read, And they were all sprinkled of him in the river Jordan:*

agination can suggest. For instance, — Christ says, I am the door, and directly after, I am the good Shepherd that giveth his life for the sheep. Shall Christ be made to say, that the door gives its life for the sheep? We reply — The figure is changed, and it is not consistent with good reasoning, to infer figures, as we do literal propositions, or to reason from one figure to another.

* Mark i. 5.

Buried with him by sprinkling: * They were all sprinkled unto (Greek, *into*) Moses, in the cloud and in the sea. †

Is it *washing*? We must then read, He shall wash you with (Greek, *in*) the Holy Ghost and fire; ‡ Arise and be washed, and wash away thy sins: § So many of us, as were washed into Jesus Christ, were washed into his death. ||

The idea of immersion *always* suits the connexion in which the word is used; or, in the words of Dr. Campbell, the word '*is always construed suitably to this meaning.*' Thus we may read, with propriety of sentiment and expression — And they were all immersed of him in the river Jordan: buried with him by immersion: They were all immersed into Moses (the Mosaic religion,) in the cloud and in the sea: He shall immerse you in the Holy Ghost and fire: Arise and be immersed, and wash away thy sins: So many of us, as were immersed into Jesus Christ, were immersed into his death.

7. The Greek people certainly understand their own native language, better than any foreigners. We must, therefore, believe that their practice, whatever it be, affords a correct and indisputable interpretation of the Greek word. Now, from the first introduction of the gospel, to the present time, they have invariably practised immersion. This is true, not only of the Greek people, but of the whole Greek church, from the southern provinces of Greece, to the northern extremity of the Russian empire, a church, which, in point of territory and population, embraces nearly one half of Christendom.

* Rom. vi. 4. † 1 Cor. x. 2. ‡ Matt. iii. 11. § Acts xxii. 16. || Rom. vi. 3.

DEYLINGIUS. 'The Greeks retain the rite of immersion to this day, as Jeremiah, the patriarch of Constantinople, declares.' *

MR. CHAMBERS. 'In the primitive times, this ceremony was performed by immersion; as it is to this day, in the oriental churches, according to the original signification of the word.' †

DR. WALL. 'All the christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one third part of Europe, are of the last sort,' (practise immersion,) 'in which third part of Europe, are comprehended the christians of Græcia, Thracia, Servia, Bulgaria, Rascia, Wallachia, Moldavia, Russia, Nigra, and so on; and even the Muscovites, who, if coldness of the country will excuse, might plead for a dispensation, with the most reason of any.' — 'The Greek church, in all branches of it, does still use immersion; and they hardly count a child, except in case of sickness, well baptized without it.' ‡

8. Not only all the branches of the Greek church, but the whole christian world, for the space of thirteen hundred years, practised immersion, as the only real baptism. Sprinkling or pouring was never tolerated, except in case of dangerous sickness, or want of a sufficient quantity of water, and in such cases, was called baptism, by way of courtesy merely, — not being regarded as real baptism, but as a substitute, which, through the indulgence of God, and (in later times) the authority of the pope, would answer the ends of baptism. Never, by any christians, in any age, was sprinkling or pouring al-

* *De Prudent. Pastoral.* Pars. iii. C. iii. § 26.
† *Cyclopædia*, Art. *Baptism*, Edit. 7th.
‡ *Hist. of Inf. Bap.* Part. ii. C. ix. p. 477.

lowed in common cases, until the council of Ravenna, assembled by the pope, in the year 1311, declared immersion or pouring to be indifferent. From that time, the latter gradually came into general use. It was not, however, admitted into England, till the middle of the sixteenth century, and not sanctioned till the middle of the seventeenth; when the Westminster assembly, influenced by Dr. Lightfoot, decided, that 'dipping of the person in water, is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered, by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.' *

As the truth of these assertions, concerning the practice of the church, must be established by testimony, independently of argumentation, I hope to be excused for the number and length of the following quotations, from Pedobaptist authors of acknowledged authority.

GROTIUS. 'That baptism used to be performed by immersion, and not by pouring, appears both from the proper signification of the word, and the places chosen for the administration of the rite, John iii. 23; Acts viii. 38; and also from the many allusions of the apostles, which cannot be referred to sprinkling, Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12.' †

VITRINGA. 'The act of baptizing is the immersion of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word. Thus also it was performed by Christ and the apostles.' ‡

CURCELLÆUS. 'Baptism was performed by plunging the whole body into water, and not by sprinkling a few drops, as is now the practice. Nor did

* *Confession*, Chap. xxviii. 3. † Apud Poli *Synops.* ad Matt. iii. 6.
‡ *Aphorismi Sanct. Theolog.* Aph. 864.

the disciples, that were sent out by Christ, administer baptism afterwards, *in any other way.*' *

WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES. '*Buried with him by baptism.* See Col. ii. 12. In this phrase, the apostle seemeth to allude to the ancient manner of baptism, which was to dip the parties baptized, and, as it were, to bury them under the water.' †

CALVIN. 'From these words, John iii. 23, it may be inferred, that baptism was administered by John and Christ, by plunging the whole body under water. Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients; for they immersed the whole body in water.' ‡

BAILEY. 'Baptism, in strictness of speech, is that kind of ablution or washing, which consists in dipping; and when applied to the christian institution, so called, it was used by the primitive christians, *in no other sense than that of dipping*, as the learned Grotius and Casauben well observe.' §

DR. WALL. ‖ 'We should not know by these accounts,' (John iii. 23: Mark i. 5; Acts viii. 38) whether the whole body of the baptized was put under water, head and all, were it not for two later proofs, which seem to me to put it out of the question. One, that St. Paul does twice, in an allusive way of speaking, call baptism a burial, which allu-

* *Relig. Christ. Institut.* L. v. C. ii.

† *Annot.* on Rom. vi. 4. See also, to the same purpose, Bp. PEARCE, *Note* on 1 Cor. xv. 29; and Bp. BURNET, *Expos.* XXXIX. *Articles*, p. 374.

‡ In Joan iii. 23. *Comment.* in Acts. viii. 38.

§ *Dictionary*, Dr. Scott's Edit. 1772.

‖ In a general convocation of the English clergy, Feb. 9, 1706, it was ordered, 'that the thanks of this house be given to Mr. Wall, vicar of Shoreham in Kent, for the learned and excellent book he hath lately written, concerning infant baptism.' In Dr. Baldwin's *Bap. of Believers only*, Part. ii. Sect. iv. p. 91.

sion is not so proper, if we conceive them to have gone into the water, only up to the armpits, &c., as it is, if their whole body was immersed. The other, the custom of the near succeeding times. — As for sprinkling, I say, as Mr. Blake, at its first coming up in England, *Let them defend it that use it.*' *

BINGHAM. 'There are a great many passages in the epistle of St. Paul, which plainly refer to this custom' (immersion.) 'As this was *the original apostolical practice;* so it continued to be *the universal practice of the church, for many ages,* upon the same symbolical reasons, as it was first used by the apostles. It appears from Epiphanius and others, that almost all heretics who retained any baptism, retained immersion also. The only heretics, against whom this charge' (of not baptizing by a *total* immersion) 'is brought, were the Eunomians, a branch of the Arians.' †

DR. TOWERSON. 'But, therefore, as there is so much the more reason, to represent the rite of immersion, as *the only legitimate rite* of baptism, because *the only one*, that can answer the ends of its institution, and those things which were to be signified by it; so especially, if (*as is well known, and undoubtedly of great force*) the general practice of the primitive church was agreeable thereto, and the practice of the Greek church, to this very day. For who can think, either the one, or the other, would have been so tenacious of so troublesome a rite, were it not, that they were well assured, as they of the primitive church might very well be, of its being *the only instituted and legitimate one?*' ‡

* *Def. of Hist. of Inf. Bap.* p. 131, 140. † *Origines Eccles.* B. xi. C. xi.
‡ *Of the Sacram. of Bap.* Part. iii. p. 58.

VENEMA. 'It is without controversy, that baptism, in the primitive church, was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling. The essential act of baptizing, in the second century, consisted, not in sprinkling, but in immersion into water, in the name of each person in the Trinity. Concerning immersion, the words and phrases that are used, sufficiently testify; and that it was performed in a river, a pool, or a fountain. To the essential rite of baptism, in the third century, pertained immersion, and not aspersion, except in cases of necessity, *and it was accounted a half-perfect baptism.* Immersion, in the fourth century, was one of those acts that were considered as essential to baptism: — nevertheless, aspersion was used in the last moments of life, on such as were called clinics, — and also, where there was not a sufficient quantity of water.'*

SALMASIUS. 'The ancients did not baptize, otherwise than by immersion, either once or thrice; except clinics, or persons confined to their beds, who were baptized in a manner of which they were capable; not in the entire laver, as those who plunge the head under water; but the whole body had water poured upon it. (Cypr. iv. Epist. vii.) Thus Novatian, when sick, received baptism, being περιχυθεις, *sprinkled*, not βαπτισθεις, *baptized.* Euseb. vi. *Hist.* C. xliii.'†

Bp. TAYLOR. 'The custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but immersion; in pursuance of the sense of the word (baptize) in the

* *Hist. Eccles.* Secul. i. § 138; Secul. ii. § 100; Secul. iii. § 51; Secul. iv. § 110.

† Apud Witsii *Œcon. Fœd.* L. iv. C. xvi. § 13.

commandment, and the example of our blessed Saviour. Now this was of so sacred account in their esteem, that they did not account it lawful to receive him into the clergy who had been only sprinkled in his baptism, as we learn from the epistle of Cornelius to Fabius of Antioch, *apud. Euseb.* L. vi. C. xliii. It was a formal and solemn question, made by Magnus to Cyprian, whether they are to be esteemed right christians, who were only sprinkled with water, and not washed or dipped.' *

CYPRIAN. (*In reply to Magnus.*) 'You ask, dear son, what I think of those, who, in sickness, receive the sacred ordinance; whether, since they are not washed (loti,) in the saving water, but have it poured on them, (perfusi,) they are to be esteemed right Christians. † In the saving sacraments, when necessity obliges, and God grants his indulgence, abridgments of divine things, (divina compendia,) will confer the whole on believers.' ‡

DR. WALL. 'Anno Dom. 251, Novatian was, by one party of the clergy and people of Rome, chosen bishop of that church, in a schismatical way, and in opposition to Cornelius, who had been before chosen by the major part, and was already ordained. Cornelius does, in a letter to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, vindicate his right, and shows that Novatian came not canonically to his orders of priesthood, much less was he capable of being chosen bishop; for that all the clergy, and a great many of the laity, were against his being ordained presbyter, because it was not lawful,

* *Ductor Dubitantium*, B. iii. C. iv. Rule 15.

† It cannot be disputed what kind of washing Cyprian intends, for none suppose that baptism has ever been performed in any other way than by immersion, and pouring or sprinkling.

‡ *Epistola ad Magnum*, Edit. Paris, 164?.

they said, for any one that had been baptized in his bed, in time of sickness (*τον εν κλινῃ δια νοσον περιχυθεντα*,) as he had been, to be admitted to any office of the clergy.' *

CORNELIUS. 'He (Novatian,) 'fell into a grievous distemper, and it being supposed that he would die immediately, he received baptism, being sprinkled with water on the bed whereon he lay, *if that can be termed baptism.*' †

VALESIUS. 'As sick persons who were baptized in their beds, could not be immersed by the priest, they had only water poured on them, (perfundebantur.) Therefore, this kind of baptism was accounted informal and imperfect; for it appeared to be received, not voluntarily, but through fear of death, by men laboring under distraction of mind, and actuated by no suitable views; *and since baptism properly signifies immersion, this kind of affusion could scarcely be called baptism.* Wherefore, clinics (for so they were called, who received this kind of baptism,) were, by the twelfth canon of the council of Neocæsarea, prohibited the priesthood.' ‡

MONKS OF CRESSY. 'Is it lawful, in case of necessity, occasioned by sickness, to baptize an infant, by pouring water on its head, from a cup, or the hands?' †

* *Hist. of Inf. Bap.* Part. ii. C. ix. p. 463.

† *Epist. ad Fabium*, apud Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* L. vi. C. xliii.

‡ *Annot.* in Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* L. vi. C. xliii. p. 120. Hence it appears, that the validity of clinic baptism was disputed, not only because the sincerity of the recipients was questionable, but because they had not been immersed. Such also was the opinion of Bp. Taylor, (see above,) and Dr. Cave, *Prim. Christ.* P. i. C. x. p. 196. The same appears from the words of Cornelius to Fabius, and still clearer from the reply of Cyprian to Magnus, which evidently implies that the objection of his correspondent was founded, not on any supposed deficiency in the recipient, but on the imperfection of the rite itself.

§ Apud Labbei *Concilia*, Tom. vi. p. 1650.

Pope STEPHEN iii. (*In reply to the monks of Cressy.*) 'Such a baptism, performed in such a case of necessity, shall be accounted valid.' *

BASNAGE. 'This,' (the response of Stephen, in the year 754,) 'is accounted the first law against immersion. The pontiff, however, did not dispense with immersion, except in case of extreme necessity. This law, therefore, did not change the mode of dipping, in public baptisms; and it was not till five hundred and fifty seven years after, that the legislature, in a council at Ravenna, in the year 1311, declared immersion and pouring indifferent.' †

VENEMA. 'Beveridge, on the fiftieth apostolical canon, asserts, that the ceremony of sprinkling began to be used instead of immersion, about the time of Pope Gregory, in the sixth century; but without producing any testimony in favor of his assertion; and it is undoubtedly a mistake. Martene declares in his *Antiq. Eccles. Rit.* L. i. P. i. C. i. that in all the ritual books, or pontifical manuscripts, ancient or modern, that he had seen, immersion was required; except by the Cenomanensian, and that of a more modern date, in which pouring on the head is mentioned. In the council of Ravenna, also, held in the year thirteen hundred and eleven, both immersion and pouring are left to the determination of the administrator; and the council of Nismes, in the year one thousand two hundred and eighty-four, permitted pouring, if a vessel could not be had; therefore, only in case of necessity.' ‡

* Apud Labbei, *Concilia*, Tom. vi. p. 1650.
† *Monumenta*, Vol. i. Præfat. C. v. § 4, in Robinson's *Hist. of Bap.* C. xxxiii.
‡ *Hist. Eccles.* Secul. vi. § 251.

Dr. Whitby. 'It being so expressly declared here,' (Rom. vi. 4.) 'and Col. ii. 12, that we are *buried with Christ in baptism*, by being buried under water, and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence; *and this immersion being religiously observed by all christians for thirteen centuries*, and approved by our church' (of England,) 'and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the Author of this institution, or any license from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity; it were to be wished that this custom might be again of general use, and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in case of the *clinici*, or in present danger of death.' *

Stackhouse. 'Accordingly, several authors have shown, that we read no where in scripture of any one's being baptized but by immersion; and from the acts of councils, and ancient rituals, have proved, that this manner of immersion continued, as much as possible, to be used, for *thirteen hundred years* after Christ.' †

Dr. Wall. 'France seems to have been the first country in the world, where baptism by affusion was used ordinarily to persons in health, and in the public way of administering it. — It being allowed to weak children' (in the reign of Queen Elizabeth) 'to be baptized by aspersion, many fond ladies and gentlewomen first, and then, by degrees, the common people, would obtain the favor of the priest, to have their children pass for weak children, too ten-

* *Note* on Rom. vi. 4. † *Hist of the Bible*, B. viii. C. i.

der to endure dipping in the water. As for sprinkling, properly called, it seems it was at sixteen hundred and forty-five, just then beginning, and used by very few. It must have begun in the disorderly times after forty-one. They, (the assembly of divines in Westminster,) reformed the font into a basin. This learned assembly could not remember, that fonts to baptize in had been always used by the primitive christians, long before the beginning of popery, and ever since churches were built; but that sprinkling, for the common use of baptizing, was really introduced, (in France first, and then in other popish countries,) in times of popery: *And that, accordingly, all those countries, in which the usurped power of the pope is, or has formerly been owned, have left off dipping of children in the font; but that all other countries in the world, which had never regarded his authority, do still use it; and that basins, except in cases of necessity, were never used by papists, or any other christians whosoever, till by themselves.'* ‡

'The way that is now ordinarily used, *we cannot deny to have been a novelty*, brought into this church, by those that had learned it in Germany, or at Geneva. And they were not contented to follow the example of pouring a quantity of water, (which had there been introduced instead of immersion,) but improved it, if I may so abuse that word, from pouring to sprinkling; that it might have as little resemblance of the ancient way of baptizing as possible.' †

Let me conclude this part of the discourse with

‡ *Hist. of Inf. Bap.* P. ii. C. ix. † *Def. of Hist. of Inf. Bap.* p. 403.

one remark. The question which we have examined, evidently relates, not to the *mode*, but the *nature* of baptism. We have not been inquiring, *how baptism must be performed, in order to be valid;* but simply, *what baptism is.* If the several considerations which have been presented are sufficient to show that baptism is immersion, it is equally clear that the terms, *baptism* and *immersion*, are equivalent and interchangeable, and that when Christ commanded his disciples to be baptized, he commanded them to be immersed.

II. *To whom is baptism to be administered?*

The words of the commission are, *Go ye, therefore, and teach* (or rather *disciple*) *all nations, baptizing them into* (εις) *the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Is there any difficulty in understanding these plain instructions? Did not Christ obviously intend, that the apostles should make disciples among all nations, and then baptize them? He surely did not intend that they should baptize whole nations indiscriminately; but those of the nations who should become disciples. * This is confirmed by the terms of the commission, as recorded by another evangelist: 'Go ye into all the

*Dr. CAMPBELL. '*Go, therefore, convert all the nations, baptizing them, &c.*' 'There are manifestly three things which our Lord here distinctly enjoins his apostles to execute, with regard to the nations: to wit, μαθητευειν, βαπτιζειν, διδασκειν, that is, to convert them to the faith, to initiate the converts into the church by baptism, and to instruct the baptized in all the duties of a christian life.' *Four Gospels*, and *Note*, on the place.

Mr. BAXTER. '*Go, disciple me all nations, baptizing them.* As for those that say they are discipled by baptizing, and not before baptizing, they speak not the sense of that text. When Christ layeth down, in the apostolical commission, the nature and order of his apostles' work, it is first to make disciples, and then to baptize them into the name of the Father,' &c. *Disputat. of right to Sacram.* p. 91, &c.

world, and preach the gospel to every creature. *He that believeth, and is baptized,* shall be saved.' *

Notwithstanding the obvious import of the law of baptism, the greater part of the christian world baptize the children of believers, on the faith of their parents, or the profession of their sponsors, and refuse baptism to believers, if they have been baptized in infancy. Does their practice appear consistent with the command of Christ? Christ commands those who believe, to be baptized. Pedobaptists adopt a system, which tends to preclude the baptism of believers. They baptize the involuntary infant, and deprive him of the privilege of ever professing his faith in the appointed way. If this system were universally adopted, it would banish believers' baptism out of the world. But leaving the evident discordance between the system of Pedobaptists, and the command of Christ, let us inquire whether infant baptism has any just support, either direct or inferential.

When any practice is proposed and enforced as a binding duty, we have a right to examine the grounds of the alleged obligation. It is not sufficient for the proposer to show, that the practice is innocent, and even compatible with every other duty: it is requisite, that he prove it binding. If one should enforce the ancient custom of dressing in white, for several days after baptism, as the duty of every Christian, it would not be necessary for us to urge one argument against it; nor would it be sufficient for him to prove it innocent, and even compatible with every other duty. We might reasonably

* Mark xvi. 15,16.

refuse compliance, until he should prove, that we are bound to comply. So, in the case of infant baptism, it is not necessary for us to urge one argument against it; nor is it sufficient for the proposer to prove, that every objection is groundless. It is requisite for him to prove, that it is obligatory. The question with every parent ought to be, Am I under obligation to have my children baptized? Now, on what grounds, is this obligation predicated?

We should naturally expect, that the baptism of infants, if enjoined at all, would have been enjoined in the law, which instituted the ordinance of Christian baptism. But this law is silent on the subject of infants. Has not Christ, however, left some other command, enjoining infant baptism? Not one. Have not the apostles, who were intrusted with farther communications of the will of Christ, left some command on this subject? Not one. Have they not left us some example of infant baptism? Not one. Have they not spoken of baptized infants, and thus given undeniable intimation of this practice? No, in no instance. On the contrary, whenever they have spoken of baptism, or of those to whom it was administered, their language implies, that baptism was a voluntary act of worship, and the baptized, professing believers. 'As many of you,' said Paul to the Galatians, 'as have been baptized into Christ, *have put on Christ.*' *

But does not the baptism of the *households* of Lydia, the jailer, and Stephanas, afford some evidence in favor of this practice?

As the term, *household*, does not necessarily imply

* Gal. iii. 27.

infants, these instances, though admitted without examination, cannot be considered, as furnishing any certain precedent, in favor of the baptism of infants. Do they afford any presumptive evidence?

It appears, that Lydia was a woman of Thyatira, residing in Philippi, for the purpose of trade.* It does not appear, that she had a husband or children. It is more probable, that her household was composed of assistants in her business, who, following her example, believed and were baptized. For we are informed, that when Paul and Silas left the city, they entered into the house of Lydia, and saw and comforted *the brethren.* †

In the case of the jailer, ‡ Paul and Silas 'spake unto him the word of the Lord, and *to all that were in his house.*' And he 'rejoiced, believing in God, *with all his house.*' §

Concerning the household of Stephanas, Paul writes, at the close of the epistle, ‖ 'that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and *that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.*' ¶

Thus, in each of these instances, especially in the two latter, some circumstances appear, which lead us to conclude, that the members of these

* Acts xvi. 14, 15. † Acts xvi. 40. ‡ Acts xvi. 23—34.

§ Dr. MACKNIGHT. '*Having believed in God with all his house;* who, it seems, were equally impressed with Paul's sermon, as the jailer himself was.' *Life of the Apostle Paul,* Chap. 5.

CALVIN.—In which also the grace of God illustriously appeared, because it suddenly brought the whole family to a pious consent. *Comment.* in loc. ‖ 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

¶ Dr. MACKNIGHT. 'The family of Stephanas seem all to have been adults when they were baptized. For they are said, chap. xvi. 15, *to have devoted themselves to the ministry to the saints.*' *Translation of the Apost. Epist.* Note 1st. on 1 Cor. i. 16.

Dr. GUYSE. 'It therefore seems—that the family of Stephanas were all adult believers, and so were baptized upon their own personal profession of faith in Christ. *Note,* on 1 Cor. i. 16.

households were professing believers. It may, therefore, be repeated, *that there is no precept nor precedent in scripture, for infant baptism.*

Let us next examine the inferential evidence, adduced in favor of this practice. *

1. *Children, it is said, have been connected with their parents in covenant with God, and, in consequence of this connexion, have received, by divine appointment, the initiating seal; their covenant connexion has never been dissolved, nor their right to the initiating seal disannulled.* †

It does not follow, that children are connected with their parents in every covenant, because they were connected with their parents in one covenant. The whole strength of the argument, now presented, rests in the supposition, that the covenant of grace, in which christians now stand, is the same with the covenant of circumcision, in which chil-

* It must be evident, that, in the above, I do not object to infant baptism, 'because it is not enjoined by any express command.' The sum of my objection is this — there is no command — there is no example — there is no inferential evidence. I do indeed believe, that a New Testament command or example is the only proper ground, on which any christian ordinance can be supported; and that it is incorrect to reason from a positive institute under one dispensation, to a positive institute under another. But many cannot see the correctness of this distinction; and as I wish to accommodate myself to all capacities, I place the subject on open ground, and say — prove it directly, or prove it inferentially — only prove it.

But suppose we should say, that express precept or example is requisite to support any ordinance. What then? Why, they exclaim, where is your express command for female communion? where, for baptizing 'adults born of christian parents?' and (why not add?) where, for baptizing a man over fifty years old, or for baptizing Burmans and Hindoos? The pertinency of such objections may be illustrated by a case. ‡

A master orders his servants to mark the fruit trees, in a certain field. The first proceeds according to orders. The second proceeds to mark other than fruit trees. Stay, says the first, none but fruit trees. Our master has expressly ordered fruit trees to be marked, and in my opinion, we are to mark no trees, but such as are expressed in the order. Indeed, says the second — then leave this orange and yonder pomegranate, for they are not expressly mentioned in the order. But, replies the first, since we are ordered

† See Dr. WORCESTER'S *Letters to Dr. Baldwin*, Let. xxi. p. iii.

‡ See Watts' *Essays* Glasgow, p. 71.

dren were connected with their parents. The latter covenant is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis.

'And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto

to mark fruit trees, all trees of that description, whether orange or pomegranate, olive or tamarind, being expressed by the generic term *fruit trees*, are expressly ordered to be marked.

Thus when believers are commanded to be baptized, all persons who sustain this character, whether born of christian parents or not, whether men or women, of whatever age and whatever country, being expressed by the generic term *believers*, are expressly commanded to be baptized.

Thus, also, when church members, saints, all, that in every place, call on the name of Jesus, are commanded to partake of the Lord's supper, § and when instances are recorded, in which the disciples, those who received the word and were baptized, did partake, ‖ all persons who sustain these characters, whether men or women, old or young, bond or free, being expressed by the generic terms *believers*, *disciples*, *church members*, &c. are expressly commanded to partake of the Lord's supper.

But where is your express command for women? We have no express command for women, as such, or for men, as such, or for children, as such; but we have an express command for believers; and if this man, that woman, and yonder child, are believers, we have an express command for them in the character of believers.

§ 1 Cor. i. 2, and xi. 17—34. ‖ Acts xx. 7, and ii. 41, 42.

thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin: and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; and my covenant shall be in your flesh, for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.' The covenant proceeds, with regard to Sarah and Ishmael, and closes in the twenty-second verse.

I now ask the Christian parent, Is this the covenant, which God has made with you? Has God covenanted to give you *these* blessings? Though he may have covenanted to give you some of these blessings, together with many others, the question must be repeated, *Is this the very covenant, which God has made with you?* If, on examining the several parts of the covenant, you feel authorized to answer in the affirmative, I reply, You are under sacred obligation to perform your part. You are un-

der sacred obligation to circumcise, or (if you are satisfied, that baptism is substituted) to baptize 'every man child' 'that is eight days old:' him 'that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.' It is in direct disobedience of the command of God, to baptize before the eighth day, or to defer baptism beyond the eighth day. It is an entire departure from the command of God, to baptize a female child, or to withhold baptism from one 'that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.' God has, in no part of his word, released you from your obligation to baptize *on the eighth day*. Nor has he required you to baptize a female child. 'Who hath required this at your hand?' Nor has he released you from your obligation to baptize the servant, born in the house, or bought with money. *

But I ask again, Do you really believe, that God

* Gal. iii. 28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* This passage has been produced, both as a declaration of the right of female infants to baptism, and as a repeal of the right of servants.

It is important, in construing scripture, to adopt the very meaning, which the inspired writer obviously intended to convey; and not to suffer the mind to lay hold on some distant meaning, which is contrary to the whole scope of the context, and probably would never have occurred, had not an hypothesis needed its support. If the latter licentious mode of interpretation be tolerated, any doctrine, however trifling or contradictory, any practice, however puerile or pernicious, may be proved to be scriptural.

In the passage before us, let us ascertain, what characters are described, and in what respect, they are one in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 26. *For ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus.* 27. *For as many of you, as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* 28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* Is it not too evident to require any remark, that the apostle is speaking of believers only, such as are the children of God by faith in Christ, and have put on Christ by being baptized?

2. The Galatians, through the influence of Judaizing teachers,

has promised you the very blessings, which he promised Abraham and his seed? Do you really believe, that God has promised to give you the land of Canaan, *even that land, in which your father Abraham was a stranger*? If not, whatever blessings God has promised to give you, whatever covenant he has made with you, it is not *the* covenant, which he made with Abraham, and in which children were connected with parents.

That the promise of the land of Canaan was, at least, one principal promise, in the covenant of circumcision, appears from the numerous passages, in which it is distinguished and presented, as the substance of the covenant.

God said to Moses, 'I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob — and I have also established my covenant with them, *to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.*' * David exhorted Israel; 'O ye seed of Israel, his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones — Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; even of the covenant, which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, *Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your*

had imbibed the error, that in order to be justified, it was necessary to be circumcised, and to keep the Mosaic law. The chief object of the apostle, in this epistle, and particularly in this chapter, is to show, that we must be justified by faith alone; that it is not necessary to become a Jew, in order to be justified; for in Christ Jesus, no distinction of nation, outward condition, or sex, is of any avail. In Christ Jesus, there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female. *If ye have faith in Christ, whatever be your descent or condition, ye are all on an equality, in point of acceptance with God.*

* Exod. vi. 3, 4.

inheritance.' * The same sentiment prevailed in the time of Nehemiah; for on a day of fasting, the whole congregation of Israel addressed God in prayer: 'Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram — and madest a covenant with him, *to give the land of the Canaanites — to his seed.*' †

The covenant of grace does not contain this promise. When we contemplate two covenants, and see that one principal article, contained in the one, is not contained in the other, by what singular process can the mind be brought to the conclusion, that these two covenants, so palpably different and distinct, are one and the same?

But it is urged, that 'the covenant made with Abraham, is expressly declared to be an everlasting or perpetual covenant; a covenant to continue to the latest generation.' ‡

And was not the land of Canaan given to Abraham and his seed, for an '*everlasting* possession?' Even when the covenant is represented as 'the word, which God commanded *to a thousand generations*,' the promise of the land of Canaan is brought forward, as the chief thing, yea, as the very sum and substance of this everlasting covenant.

So also the priesthood was confirmed to Phinehas and *his seed* in an *everlasting* covenant. § So also the feast of expiation, on the tenth day of the seventh month, was established by a statute, which was declared to be an *everlasting* statute. ‖

It is urged, that the covenant 'comprised all the

* 1 Chron. xvi. 13 — 18. † Neh. ix. 7, 8.
‡ Dr. WORCESTER'S *Two Discourses*, Disc. 1. p. 27.
§ Num. xxv. 13. ‖ Lev. xvi. 34.

blessings and privileges ever promised to believers and the church.'

Whether this be true or not, since it comprised one blessing, which is not comprised in the covenant of grace, it cannot be the same covenant. But is it true?

The two principal promises, made to the seed of Abraham, are, that God would give them the land of Canaan, and that he would be their God. What is the import of the latter promise?

Is there any absurdity in saying, that God was the God, not only of the few pious descendants of Abraham, but of the nation of Israel at large? Was he not the God of the Jews, in a sense, in which he was not the God of the Gentiles? Did he not select the posterity of Abraham, in the line of Isaac and Jacob, and distinguish them above all other nations? Did he not protect them from their enemies, and grant them a rich abundance of temporal blessings? Did he not give them his law, and establish among them his worship, and the ordinances of his house? Did he not, by these spiritual advantages, furnish them with opportunities, which no other nation enjoyed, of obtaining him as their spiritual portion? Is there any absurdity in saying, that, in these respects, he was the God of the nation at large? If not, is there any absurdity in supposing, that his promise imported, that he would be their God, in these respects?

God is represented, in the scriptures, as the God of his people, in different senses. When, in the new covenant, he promises to put his laws in their mind, and to write them in their hearts, and to be

to them a God,* the promised renewal of heart shows, that the latter promise imports, that he will be the *spiritual* portion of his people. When, in the Revelation, it is promised, that God will be with men, and be their God,† the connexion shows, that the promise imports that he will be their *eternal* portion. When, in the covenant of circumcision, he promised to be the God of the seed of Abraham, the connexion of this promise with other promises, and the manner of fulfilment, show, that the promise imported, that he would multiply and protect them; that he would grant them an abundance of temporal blessings; and that he would distinguish them above all other nations by spiritual advantages.

The seed to which the land of Canaan was promised, was most evidently the lineal descendants of Abraham. To the same seed the Lord promised to be a God. Mark the terms of the promises: 'I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be *their* God.' But he was not their God, in a spiritual sense. It appears from their history, that, in every age, a remnant only were truly pious.

Those who maintain, that he promised to be the spiritual portion of the seed of Abraham, are obliged to explain the promise to mean, that God would be the God of *some* of the seed of Abraham. Is this a fair explanation? Is it not using undue freedom with the word of God? Is it not indeed frittering away the plain import of scripture?

Suppose that a king should promise peculiar privi-

* Heb. viii. 10. † Rev. xxi. 3.

leges to a faithful subject and his posterity; not *all* or *some*, but simply, his posterity. Would not the subject be authorized to expect, that all his posterity would enjoy these privileges? Suppose that it should appear, that the king actually conferred certain peculiar privileges on all the posterity, excepting those who refused his kindness. Suppose farther, that it should appear, that the king had selected, from among his subjects, a number, in which were some of the posterity of the faithful subject, and raised them to nobility. Would there be any doubt, concerning the import of the king's promise to his faithful subject? Could it be urged, with any appearance of probability, that when he promised peculiar privileges, to the posterity of this subject, he did not intend those which he actually conferred on them, but that nobility, which he conferred on a very few of them?

God covenanted to give the land of Canaan and his favour, to the posterity of Abraham, in the line of Isaac. That his posterity were not to come into immediate possession of the land, had been previously stipulated.* God faithfully performed his promises. He conferred the blessings promised, on the posterity of Abraham, in the line of Isaac, excepting those only, who rejected his kindness. A refusal to accept a promised favor, always releases the promiser from his obligation, unless (is it necessary to add?) the promised favor includes such a disposition of the heart, as precludes refusal. Esau and his posterity, as well as many of the posterity of Jacob, refused to accept the Lord as their God;

*Gen. xv. 13—16.

not merely, as their spiritual portion, but as their God in the sense promised. They acknowledged and worshipped other gods. The Israelites frequently forsook God; and he as frequently forsook them. But when they repented and returned to him, he remembered his covenant, and delivered them from their distresses. At length, they rejected him, in the most decided manner, by rejecting his Son. They would not have him to reign over them. Since that time God has forsaken them. But when they shall repent and return, God will again remember his covenant. The manner, however, in which he will restore his favour, though intimated in the prophecies, can be learned from the event only.

What is the ground taken by the advocates of the covenant of circumcision? Do they say, that God promised to be the God of Abraham's seed, in a spiritual sense, *if they accepted the promise*? 'This would be a complete abandonment of their argument. For it would place such, as claim interest in the covenant of circumcision, exactly upon a level with all others. God has engaged to save all who reverence, worship and obey him, though Abraham be ignorant of them, and Israel acknowledge them not.'

Do they say, that the promise imported, 'that, *on condition of faith and fidelity on Abraham's part, in respect to his children*, they should become subjects of grace, and heirs of the blessings of the covenant.' *

But have we a right to make conditions, which God has not made? Have we a right to take his covenant, and fashion it to suit our preconceived, fa-

* Dr. WORCESTER's *Two Discourses*, Disc. 1, p. 36.

vorite sentiments? God did not promise, I will be a God to thy seed, on condition of faith and fidelity on thy part, in respect to thy seed. Neither in this covenant, nor in any of his communications with Abraham, did God inform him, that the grand condition, on which he would be a God to his seed, was *fidelity on his part, in respect to his seed.* *

But it is said, that, in this covenant, God required Abraham *to walk before him, and to be perfect.*

Is this a condition of the covenant? Did God suspend the performance of his promises, on the perfection of Abraham? Surely, then, this was not the covenant of grace. Under the new dispensation we are indeed commanded to love God with all our heart, and to be perfect in holiness. God requires this of all mankind, under every dispensation. It would be derogatory to his character to require less. But this is not a *condition* of the covenant of grace. The blessings of the covenant are not suspended on such a condition. If we are interested in Christ by faith, notwithstanding our imperfections and sins,

* Gen. xviii. 19. *For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.* Much stress has been laid on the auxiliary *shall*, as implying an engagement to the family of Abraham, in consequence of his fidelity in instructing them. In the original, the grammatical construction of the verb ושמרו, rendered *they shall keep*, is precisely of the same import, as the grammatical construction of the preceding verb וצוה, rendered *he will command* No reason, therefore, can be given, why the verbs should not be constructed similarly in the translation. For the same reason, that the preceding verb is rendered *will command*, ought the following to be rendered *will keep*. This passage appears to contain a prediction, rather than an engagement God foresaw that Abraham would be faithful in instructing his family; that they would observe the requirements taught them; and that, with a view to this obedience, both on the part of Abraham and his family, it would be suitable for him to bestow on them the promised blessings.

God will be our God *through grace.* Yet the author above cited, says, 'To become entitled to the blessings of the covenant, Abraham must walk before God, and be perfect.'* If so, this covenant was certainly not the covenant of grace. It might be expected, therefore, that the advocates of this covenant would, for the sake of their own cause, readily admit, and strenuously maintain, what appears to be the fact, that this requirement was not a condition of the covenant, or even a part of the covenant, but merely a preamble or introduction to the covenant. God introduces the solemn transaction, by saying, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.* Then follows, *I will make my covenant with thee.* Then are presented the terms of the covenant; first, the part which God would perform, consisting in the bestowment of several blessings on Abraham, and his seed; and secondly, the part which Abraham and his seed were to perform, consisting in the observance of the rite of circumcision; and lastly, several explanatory and restricting articles, with regard to Sarah and Ishmael and Isaac. That the observance of the rite of circumcision was, emphatically, *the* condition of this covenant, appears from the manner in which it is presented, the conspicuous place which it holds in the covenant, and the penalty attached to its neglect. 'And the uncircumcised man child — shall be cut off from his people; *he hath broken my covenant.*'

It is a popular and prevailing sentiment, that this promise imports, that so many of the seed shall be subjects of grace, that the church shall be perpetuated '*in the line of natural descent.*'

* Dr. WORCESTER'S *Two Discourses*, Disc. 1, p. 34.

Is this hypothesis consistent with facts? Has not God transferred the church from the posterity of Abraham to the Gentiles? Is it said, that the Jews were rejected because of unbelief? But has not God the hearts of all in his hand? and had he not, on this hypothesis, promised, that the church should be perpetuated in the posterity of Abraham? Why, then, did he not perform? But this is not the only transfer. If the christian church is the same with the Jewish, and if the same promises are made to the former, as were made to the latter, may it not be asked, Where are the descendants of the once flourishing churches, in the north of Africa? Where are the descendants of all the Asiatic churches, planted by the apostles themselves? They are now covered with the darkness of Mahomedan superstition. Surely, we are not there to look for the Church of Christ. This church is now transferred to the west of Europe, and embraces the descendants of those, who were bowing down to idols of wood and stone, during the prosperity of the eastern churches.

It is true, that God regards the prayers of pious parents, for their offspring, and frequently grants his blessing on their religious instructions. We may, therefore, expect, that in places where the truth has prevailed, a pious seed will be preserved for some generations. But that this is God's uniform mode of operation, or that he has covenanted to perpetuate the church, *in the line of natural descent*, a slight glance at ecclesiastical history must effectually disprove.

Let us next consider several passages in the New Testament, in which it has been supposed, that the

covenant of circumcision is recognized as the covenant of grace.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter addressed the Jews: 'The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.'* The expression, *unto you and to your children*, resembling the expression *unto thee and to thy seed*, used in the covenant of circumcision, has occasioned the supposition, that this is a repetition of one of the promises, contained in that covenant. There were several promises made to Abraham and his seed. Does the context lead us to suppose, that Peter intended one, rather than another? Or was one of the promises called by way of eminence, *the* promise? Is it probable, that Peter alluded to one of the promises in this covenant, calling it *the* promise, when, through his whole discourse, he had not spoken of Abraham, or of any covenant made with him? Is it not probable — is it not certain, that he alluded to the promise, concerning which he had been discoursing from the first?

The Jews were astonished at the pouring out of the Spirit on the disciples. Peter states the event, as a fulfilment of the promise spoken by the prophet Joel: 'And it shall come to pass, in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and *your sons and your daughters* shall prophesy,' &c.†

In the progress of this discourse, he says, that Jesus, having received of the Father *the promise of the Holy Ghost*, hath shed forth this; and finally, he

*Acts ii. 39. † Ver. 17.

exhorts them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive *the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children*, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' More summarily, thus; God said, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, even on your sons and daughters: Jesus hath received this promise, and begun to perform it, by shedding forth this on us, his disciples; repent ye, therefore, and ye shall receive the same gift; the Spirit shall be poured out on you; for the same promise is made to you and your children, &c. *

In the epistle to the Galatians, it is written, 'If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.' †

Let us inquire, what is implied in believers' being the seed of Abraham; and what promise is here intended.

In the context (ver. 6, 7,) it is written, 'Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness: Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.' Abraham believed; therefore, they who believe, are his children. This is perfectly in the style of scripture. The unbelieving Jews are called children of the devil, because they were like the devil, in their character and conduct. On the same

* In this explanation of the promise, I am happy to agree with WITSIUS, *Exercitat. in Symb.* Exercit. xi. § 19; LIMBORCH, *Comment.* in loc. VENEMA, *Dissertat. Sac.* L. iii. C. iv. § 7, 8; Dr. OWEN, *Doct. of Saints' Perseverance*, p. 116; Dr. HAMMOND, *Works*, Vol. i. p. 490; Dr. WHITBY, *Annot.* on the place; and Dr. DODDRIDGE, *Note*, on the place.

† Gal. iii. 29.

principle, the profligate are called children of Belial; believers, children of light; and unbelievers, children of disobedience. On the same principle, believers are called children of Abraham. They are like Abraham, in character and conduct. They have the faith of Abraham.

But why are they called children of Abraham, rather than of some other patriarch, or holy man of old, whose faith they likewise imitate? The reason is most obvious. The apostle addressed this and most of his epistles to churches composed of converted Jews and persons imbued with Jewish sentiments — persons who constantly heard from the Jews, with whom they consorted, of the high privilege of being descended from Abraham. Most pertinently, therefore, does he exhort them: Be not bewitched, ye foolish men, with such representations. If ye have the faith of Abraham, whether descended from him or not, ye are really his children to every valuable purpose, being his spiritual seed; for if ye resemble Abraham in his faith, rest assured, that ye will resemble him in his reward; your faith, like his, will be accounted for righteousness. And thus, as the natural seed are heirs of the land of Canaan, and the temporal blessings, secured in the covenant of circumcision, ye, the spiritual seed, are heirs of the far more excellent, the spiritual blessings, secured in the covenant of grace. For 'if children, then heirs.' Accordingly, the apostle continues, 'And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, *In thee shall all nations be blessed.* So then, they which be of faith, are

blessed with faithful Abraham.' And again (ver. 14,) 'That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ.' And in the last verse, 'And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.'

There can be no doubt, that the blessing, of which believers are heirs, is justification by faith; and that the promise, according to which they are heirs of this blessing, is the *gospel promise* made to Abraham. The apostle's reasoning may be summarily stated thus: As Abraham was justified, by having his faith accounted for righteousness; and as the blessing of Abraham is come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, so that they who are of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham, according to the promise, In thee shall all nations be blessed; ye, believing Gentiles, being, by faith, the children of Abraham, are, according to the promise, heirs of the blessing of justification by faith. *

The same sentiments are contained in the epistle to the Romans: 'For we say, that faith was reckoned

*Dr. MACKNIGHT, on Gal. iii. 16. *Translation.* 'Now, to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. (See ver. 19.) He doth not say, And in seeds, as concerning many, but as concerning one person, And in thy seed, who is Christ.'

Note. '*He does not say, And in seeds.* So τοις σπερμασι should be translated, the preposition εν being understood here, as is plain from the promise itself, Gen. xxii. 18. *And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* ‡ The apostle having affirmed, ver. 15, that, according to the customs of men, none but the parties themselves can set aside or alter a covenant that is ratified, he observes in this verse, that the promises in the covenant with Abraham were made to him and to his seed. The promise to Abraham is that recorded Gen. xii. 3. *In thee shall all the families,* LXX. πασαι αι φυλαι, all the tribes, *of the earth be blessed.* The promise to his seed is that recorded Gen. xxii. 18. *And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* See ver. 19. Now since by the oath which God sware to Abraham, after he had laid Isaac on the

‡ See Acts iii. 25; also *Luther's Commentary on Galatians*, p. 807.

to Abraham for righteonsness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had, yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised: that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.' * *He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had, yet being uncircumcised.* The meaning of the apostle cannot be that Abraham performed circumcision on himself and family, and thus *sealed his faith*, or attested his faith, as believers seal or attest their faith by solemn acts of worship. Not his faith, but the righteousness of his faith, was sealed. Man may seal or attest his faith, by acts of worship and obedience; none but God, can seal the righteousness of faith. None but God, can declare faith imputable for righteousness. Abraham received the

altar, both promises were ratified, the apostle reasons justly, when he affirms, that both promises must be fulfilled. And having shown, ver 9, that the promise to Abraham to bless all the families of the earth in him, means their being blessed, as Abraham had been, not with justification through the law of Moses, as the Jews affirmed, but with justification by faith, he proceeds, in this passage, to consider the promise made to Abraham's seed, that in it likewise all the nations of the earth should be blessed. And from the words of the promise, which are not, *in thy seeds*, but *in thy seed*, he argues that the seed, in which the nations of the earth should be blessed, is not Abraham's seed in general, but one of his seed in particular, namely, Christ, who, by dying for all nations, hath delivered them from the curse of the law, that the blessing of justification by faith might come on believers of all nations, through Christ, as was promised to Abraham and to Christ.'

Dr. GUYSE. 'The covenant that I have given a hint of (ver. 8, 9, 14,) relating to the way of our being accepted of God as righteous, consisted of a free promise, which, because of its vast comprehension of blessings, and of its being first made to Abraham, and afterwards repeated to him, and to Isaac (Gen. xii. 3, and xxii. 18, and xxvi. 4,) may be called *the promises*.' *Paraphrase* on Gal. iii. 16.

* Rom. iv. 9—11.

sign of circumcision, as a divine attestation of the righteousness of his faith; or, in the words of Stephen, 'God gave him the covenant of circumcision,'* and thus sealed the righteousness of his faith, or declared, that his faith was accounted for righteousness. Still farther, God attested the righteousness of that faith, which Abraham had *in uncircumcision*, and thus established him the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also. Had not the righteousness of *this* faith been attested, it might have been doubted, whether Abraham was the father of any but circumcised believers, in such a sense, as that they would be heirs of his blessing, or have their faith imputed for righteousness. But God attested the righteousness of that faith, which he had in uncircumcision, and thus proved, that it is not so much circumcision, as faith, that makes us children of Abraham; and consequently (for if children, then heirs,) that, if we have his faith, though we be not circumcised, our faith, like his, will be imputed for righteousness, and thus we become heirs of the blessing of justification by faith, according to the promise made to Abraham, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

This gospel promise, an ever memorable charter of all the blessings which Jewish and Gentile believers enjoy through Christ, is not contained in the covenant of circumcision, but in a covenant made with Abraham, at the time of his calling, twenty-four years before, and recorded in the twelfth chapter of Genesis.† This covenant was confirmed to

* Acts vii. 8. † Ver. 2, 3.

Abraham, by an oath, when he offered up Isaac ; * 'that by two immutable things,' a promise and an oath, 'in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation.' † This covenant was renewed to Isaac and Jacob, together with the covenant of circumcision. ‡ This is the covenant, which the apostle Peter, 'on the bright morning of the gospel day,' presented in these words: 'Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant, which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, *And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.*' § This is the covenant, which being 'confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after,' and we may add, the covenant of circumcision, which was twenty-four years after, 'cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.' ‖

But it will be said, that in the fourth of Romans, we find an incontestable application of one of the promises in the covenant of circumcision. The apostle represents Abraham's being the father of believers, as a fulfilment of the promise, that he should be a father of many nations. ¶

The New Testament writers frequently apply historical and prophetical passages of the Old Testament, in a secondary sense, without giving any intimation of their primary import. The Lord said, by the prophet Hosea, 'When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.' ** This is applied, by an evangelist, to the return of Jesus from Egypt, without any intimation of its pri-

* Gen. xxii. 16—18. † Heb. vi. 18.
‡ Gen. xxvi. 3, 4. and xxviii. 13, 14. § Acts iii. 25.
‖ Gal. iii. 17. ¶ Ver. 17. ** Hos. xi. 1.

mary import.* The Jews were commanded not to break a bone of the paschal lamb.† This is applied, by another evangelist, directly to Jesus, without any intimation of its primary import.‡ In the case before us, God constituted Abraham a father of many nations. This is applied, by an apostle, to Abraham's being the father of all believers, without any intimation of its primary import and fulfilment.

These instances illustrate the principle, on which the New Testament frequently proceeds, in applying events and predictions recorded in the Old Testament. We are to use their application with proper caution. We are not to extend the parallel between the type and the antitype, farther than we are authorized by the inspired penman.

When the evangelist represents the return of Jesus from Egypt, as a fulfilment of that which was spoken by the Lord, 'Out of Egypt have I called my son,' he recognizes some kind of identity between Jesus and the people of Israel. When the apostle represents the relation between believers and Abraham, as a fulfilment of that which was spoken to Abraham, 'A father of many nations have I made thee,' he recognizes some kind of identity between the posterity of Abraham and believers. In both cases, the recognition of identity is of the same kind, and to the same extent. But we do not infer, from the former application, that Jesus and Israel are the same, in any other respect, than that they both are sons of God, though in very different senses, and were both called out of Egypt. Nor from the latter, are we to infer, that believers

* Matt. ii. 15. † Exod. xii. 46. ‡ John xix. 36.

and the posterity of Abraham are the same, in any other respect, than that they both have Abraham for a father, though in very different senses; the one, on account of natural descent, the other, on account of faith. We instantly discover the impropriety of extending the parallel between Israel and Jesus, or of reasoning from the former to the latter. And is it not as evidently improper to extend the parallel between the posterity of Abraham and believers? or to infer that the latter are under the same regulations, or in the same covenant, as the former?

Though the evangelist John presents the fact, that the soldiers broke not the legs of Christ, as a fulfilment of the prophecy, implied in the command, respecting the paschal lamb, 'Neither shall ye break a bone thereof,' and thus, in the most unequivocal manner, recognizes an identity between the paschal lamb and Christ, yet we do not hesitate to infer, that the lamb was merely a type of Christ. And we do not feel authorized to reason from the type to the antitype. We do not conclude that Christ is subject to the same rules of treatment, as the paschal lamb; or that those who partake of Christ are bound by the Mosaic ritual to use the same ceremonies as the Jews, in partaking of the paschal lamb. Yet this may be proved, by the same kind of reasoning, as it can be proved, from the allusion of the apostle under consideration, that believers are subject to the same regulations, or are in the same covenant, as the posterity of Abraham. But in the words of Dr. Scott, when speaking of another instance of 'forcing figurative language into a literal meaning, and so grounding doctrines upon it,' 'common sense is

usually sufficient to preserve men from such absurdities, when there is no personal or party interest to serve by them.' *

Let me now call your attention to the important fact, that with regard to the Gentiles, the token of the covenant of circumcision has been forbidden.

When certain Jews from Jerusalem taught the believing Gentiles at Antioch, that except they were circumcised after the manner of Moses, they could not be saved, the council of Apostles and elders, assembled in Jerusalem, under the special direction of the Holy Spirit, wrote and concluded, that the brethren 'observe no such thing.' † Accordingly, Paul wrote to the Corinthians, 'Is any man called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised;' ‡ and to the Galatians, 'Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.' §

Is not the prohibition of the token of a covenant an explicit declaration, that the covenant is abolished?

God instituted the rite of circumcision, to be the token of a certain covenant, which he made with Abraham and his seed, and declared, at the same time, that he who did not receive the token, had broken the covenant. Such a token is one species of language. Wherever it appears, it conveys an idea of what it was instituted to represent. The language of the rainbow is, There will never again be a deluge. The language of the sign of circumcision is, Such a covenant exists between the seed

* *Note* on 1 Cor. x. 4.
† Acts xv. 1—31, and xxi. 25.
‡ 1 Cor. vii. 18.
§ Gal. v. 2.

of Abraham and God. After this language has been allowed for several centuries, to the natural and also to the adopted seed, it is finally, with regard to the Gentiles, expressly forbidden. God says, Let this language be no longer used; let it be no longer said, that such a covenant exists between me and any Gentile.

It is urged, that though the rite of circumcision is abolished, the rite of baptism is substituted, as a token of the same import.

But if this be true, should we not expect to find baptism enjoined, when circumcision is forbidden? Should we not expect to find this substitution clearly stated in scripture? Yet, in no instance where circumcision is forbidden, is there any intimation of baptism. Nor is this substitution mentioned in any passage, through the whole of the New Testament. It is not mentioned, or even intimated, in those instances, where, had it been really made, the circumstances render the omission perfectly unaccountable. Notwithstanding the Judaizing teachers greatly complained, that circumcision was not enforced on the Gentiles, the substitution of baptism, which would have furnished a complete answer, was never suggested by the apostles. Notwithstanding the Galatians had imbibed a belief of the necessity of circumcision, and Paul wrote an epistle expressly to correct their mistake, yet, throughout this epistle, no distant intimation is given of the very thing, which must have completely satisfied their minds, and silenced all opposition.

On the contrary, so far were the Jewish converts from believing in this substitution, that even after

they were commanded to be baptized themselves, though already circumcised, they continued, under the direction of the apostles, to circumcise their children. The elders at Jerusalem said to Paul, The Jews that are zealous of the law, 'are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews, which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. Do, therefore, this that we say to thee, — *that all may know, that those things, whereof they are informed concerning thee, are nothing.*' *

But as the substitution of baptism in the place of circumcision, is generally considered absolutely essential to the Pedobaptist cause, you will naturally presume, that though the scripture is silent on the subject, and though facts recorded in scripture, are adverse to the supposition, still something plausible can be urged in its favor. Let me, therefore, present to your view, accompanied with a few remarks, *the four arguments*, which a late distinguished writer has advanced, in proof of this substitution. †

'1. Baptism is now, as circumcision anciently was, an instituted pre-requisite to a regular standing in the visible church.'

Not to question the propriety of calling the Jewish and Christian churches collectively the visible church, it is sufficient here to observe, that circumcision was not pre-requisite to a regular standing in the church; otherwise, females were not regular members.

* Acts xxi. 20 — 24.
† Dr. WORCESTER's *Letters to Dr. Baldwin*, Let. xvi.

'2. Baptism, under the present dispensation, is of the same significance, with circumcision under the ancient.' 'As circumcision signified the renovation of the heart, or regeneration; so baptism signifies the same thing.'

But did circumcision, as it was commanded to be administered among the Jews, signify that the subject was regenerated? Surely not.

In all languages, terms which literally denote sensible objects, are sometimes figuratively used, to convey ideas of immaterial or spiritual objects. But we do not infer, that the former objects are signs of the latter. The term *heart*, which literally denotes a part of the body, is figuratively used, to denote the affections of the mind. But we do not infer that the former is a sign of the latter. Circumcision, in the literal acceptation, separated the Jews from the Gentile world, and brought them into a state of relative holiness. Hence, the term was figuratively used, to signify moral separation from the world, and real holiness of heart. But it is preposterous to infer, from this figurative use of the word, that circumcision signified regeneration.

Admitting, however, that circumcision and baptism are both significant of regeneration, it does not follow, that *the general significance* of the two ordinances is the same, because there is a similarity of significance in one particular. Circumcision chiefly signified, that the subject was interested in that covenant, which God made with Abraham, and of which he expressly declared this ordinance to be the token. Baptism is represented as an act of worship, by which the baptized profess the religion of Christ,

and signify their fellowship with Christ, in death and resurrection, and their being washed from sin. How different the leading import of the two ordinances.

'3. Baptism, under the present dispensation, is a seal of the same thing, of which circumcision was a seal under the ancient. We have the express declaration of the apostle, that circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of faith.' — 'Of the same righteousness of faith, baptism is now also a seal.'

God gave Abraham the sign of circumcision, and thus sealed the righteousness of the faith, which he had in uncircumcision. But the *performance* of this rite, though it might seal or attest the faith of an adult subject, could not attest the righteousness of his faith; much less could it attest the righteousness of their faith, who never exercised any faith. That the *administration* of baptism can attest the righteousness of faith, is equally impossible. And that baptism is an attestation from God of the righteousness of faith, has been scarcely advanced, much less proved.

'4. That baptism is come in the place of circumcision, we are decisively taught, by the apostle, in Col. ii. 10 — 13. 'And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. In whom also ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you,

being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him.'

In this passage, we are taught, that the Colossians were spiritually circumcised, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, and spiritually baptized, by being buried with Christ, and being raised to newness of life.* Thus they are represented, as having passed the whole process of death, burial and resurrection. The death, the putting off the body, is called circumcision, in allusion to the nature of that rite; and the burial and resurrection are fitly represented in the ordinance of baptism or immersion. But though some other explanation of the passage should be adopted, is it possible, since the apostle is speaking of *spiritual* circumcision and spiritual baptism, both of which have been received by the Colossians, to make out an inference, that external baptism has come in the place of external circumcision?

A view of these *four arguments* may serve to convince you, how little can be said in support of a point, which, on account of its importance in the Pedobaptist system, demands the fairest and most invincible proof; and may lead you to adopt the sentiment, contained in the following words of Dr. Emmons: 'Can we justly conclude, that it is the duty of believers now to circumcise their children, or even to baptize them, because it was once their duty to circumcise them? The truth is, we must learn the peculiar duties of believers, under the present dispensation of the covenant of grace, from the

* See Rom. vi. 4.

dispensation itself, *which enjoins all the peculiar duties which belong it.* *

2. By many Pedobaptist writers, especially the advocates of national churches, the argument from the Abrahamic or Jewish dispensation, is stated in a manner somewhat different from that which we have been considering.

Infants, they say, *were constituted members of the visible church; they have never been excluded from the church, and consequently are now members.*

This argument, when analyzed, stands thus: Infants were constituted members of the Abrahamic or Jewish church; they were never excluded from this church; therefore they are members of the christian church. Is this conclusive? The whole strength of the argument rests in the supposition, that the christian church is the same with the Abrahamic or Jewish. How can this be proved?

It cannot be proved, by showing, that they are founded on the same covenant; for there is no evidence, that the covenant of circumcision is the same with the covenant of grace.

Nor can it be proved, by adducing promises and prophecies of the perpetuity of Zion, and her final triumph and glory. Some of these promises and prophecies relate to the final conversion and restoration of the Jewish people. Others evidently belong to the true church; to that Zion that includes all the saints, who existed before the organization of a visible church, and all the truly pious, whether

* *Dissert. on the Qualifications for the Christian Sacraments*, Chap. ii. Sect. v.

they have belonged to any organized visible church or not. No one denies the perpetuity and identity of the church of God, to which the promises and prophecies belong. In order to make the application of these promises and prophecies bear on the subject, it is necessary to show, that they belong not to that church, which commenced in the persons of our first parents, and will continue to the end of the world, but to a particular organized body, which commenced in the family of Abraham.

Nor can the point be proved, from the apostle's discourse concerning the olive tree, from which the Jews, the natural branches, were broken off, and into which the believing Gentiles were engrafted ; * unless it be shown that the olive tree represents that particular organized body, the Abrahamic or Jewish church, or in the words of Dr. Austin, 'the society of Israel.'

It is evident, that the olive tree cannot represent this body or society, as existing under the Sinai law, for Gentile believers are not introduced into a similar state. And is it not equally evident, that, for a similar reason, it cannot represent this body or society, as founded on the covenant of circumcision? The ingrafted branches are represented, as partaking of the root and fatness of the olive tree. But whatever blessings Gentile believers enjoy, they do not enjoy the peculiar blessings, secured in the covenant of circumcision. They do not inherit the land of Canaan, though that was one distinct, principal promise in this covenant. Nor can it be admitted, that they enjoy the favor of God, in that sense, and

* Rom. xi. 16—24.

in that only, in which it was engaged to the posterity of Abraham.* The olive tree cannot, therefore, represent the community of Israel, as founded on the covenant of circumcision; nor, for the same reason, can it represent the covenant itself.

Christ said to his disciples, 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. *Every branch in me, that beareth not fruit, he taketh away.*' † This may suggest the proper interpretation of the symbolical language of the apostle. The olive tree may represent the Messiah, as presented in the gospel promise made to Abraham, and in subsequent promises, in which all the pious cordially rested, and in which the Jews, *as a nation*, professed to rest. They are called natural branches, conformably to the language of the evangelist, 'He came unto *his own*, and *his own* received him not.' ‡ The natural branches were unfruitful, and, therefore, according to the prediction of Christ, were taken away; or, in the style of the apostle, because of unbelief they were broken off; and in their place the believing Gentiles were ingrafted, and now partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree, the riches of grace in Jesus Christ.

*Dr. AUSTIN. 'The reinsertion of these broken off branches into the good olive tree (alluding to the restoration of the Jews,) 'can mean no less than their occupying the place, which they held, before they were broken off. Occupying this place, they necessarily partake of the fatness of the olive tree. This is the blessing, the entire blessing secured in the promise. But the land of Canaan is expressly a part of this blessing. Their being brought back then under the covenant, must necessarily restore them to the enjoyment of this land.' *View of the Economy of the Church of God*, Chap. xiv. p 305.

If this reasoning be correct, it follows, that Gentile believers cannot be considered as ingrafted into the olive tree, because they do not inherit the land of Canaan, which is expressly a part of the blessing secured in the promise, and represented by the fatness of the olive.

† John xv. 1, 2. ‡ John i. 11.

Nor can it be proved, that the churches are the same, by showing, that they are alike in some respects. Much labor has been expended, in exhibiting those points, in which the churches are alike. But surely, two things may be alike in many respects, and still not be the same. It is granted, that they are not alike in all respects. The very point, therefore, necessary to be proved, is, that they are alike in that respect, which concerns the question, the mode of introduction, or the requisites to admission. To ascertain whether two institutions are alike in any one respect, we must form an idea of each, from all the information we can obtain, and compare the ideas.

On examining the Scriptures, with regard to the Jewish church, we find, that it was *a select race*, composed chiefly of the posterity of Abraham, in the line of Isaac and Jacob. To be descended from Abraham, in this line, was sufficient to introduce the subject into the Jewish church. Persons of Gentile extraction, also, who were purchased by Jews, or wished to enjoy the privileges of Jews, could be introduced into this church by circumcision. * Whether any other requisite to admission was appointed by God, we are not informed. This church continued nearly two thousand years. At length, Christ came, and according to ancient prophecies, *set up his kingdom* in the world. † He abolished the distinction, which had so long subsisted between the posterity of Abraham and other nations, and either in person, or by his Spirit, selected his followers from both Jews and Gentiles, thus making 'in himself, *of twain, one new man.*' ‡

* Exod. xii. 44—49. † Dan. ii. 44. ‡ Eph. ii. 15.

On examining the Scriptures, with regard to this new kingdom, the Christian church, we learn, from the formation of particular churches, and the instructions addressed to the members, as well as from addresses made to both Jews and Gentiles, who were without, that it is a society, composed of *select individuals*, who, not merely collectively or nationally, but personally, profess faith in Christ: credible evidence of personal piety being the requisite to admission. Whether natural descent, or any religious rite, is sufficient to introduce the subject into this church, we are not informed. We have, therefore, no evidence, that, in that respect, which concerns the question before us, the two churches are alike.

It has, however, been supposed, that the church membership of infants, is supported in the following passage: 'Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; *for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*' *

In the Gospels of Mark and Luke, it follows, 'Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God, as a little child, he shall not enter therein.' † We cannot suppose, that our Lord used words, in such different senses, in the same speech, as would unavoidably mislead his hearers. In the latter passage, the kingdom of God denotes heaven, and to receive the kingdom, as a little child, is to receive it with the humility and docile disposition which characterize children. This passage explains the former. Of such, says Christ, is the kingdom of heaven. Does he mean, of such in age and size, of such in the

* Matt. xix. 14. † Mark x. 15, & Luke xviii. 17.

moral temper of the heart, or of such in humility and docility of disposition? His subsequent remark determines in favor of the latter meaning. Nor is this a singular application of the phrase. On another occasion, he says, 'Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'* He certainly does not mean, Except ye become as little children, in age and size, but in humility; for he immediately adds, 'Whosoever, therefore, shall *humble himself, as this little child,*' &c.†

The following passage also has been supposed to favor the church membership of infants: 'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; *else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.*'‡

The holiness ascribed to the children, cannot be moral holiness, for it is ascribed to the unbelieving parent also. Nor can it be ceremonial or federal holiness, securing a title to church membership, or any church privilege; for though it is ascribed to the unbelieving parent, he is not considered a member of the church, or entitled to any church privilege. Nor is this interpretation consistent with the apostle's reasoning. It appears, that the Corinthians had in-

* Matt. xviii. 3.

† Matt. *Suffer little children.* Mark. *Suffer* the *little children.* Luke. *Suffer little children.* It should, however, be observed, that, in the original, the expression is the same in each gospel. The article is uniformly inserted; though, by our translators, it is omitted in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Without the article, the words of Christ seem to form a *general* direction concerning little children; but, with the article, they evidently form a *particular* direction, concerning *those children,* whose approach the disciples were preventing.

‡ 1 Cor. vii. 14.

quired of the apostle, whether it was lawful for believers, who were married to unbelievers, to continue the marriage connexion. The apostle determines, that it is lawful; for, says he, the unbeliever is sanctified by the believer, that is, as 'every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is *sanctified* by the word of God and prayer.'* In this sense, the unbeliever is sanctified, so that it is lawful for the parties to dwell together. Now if it was not lawful to dwell together, your children would, of consequence, be unclean. But they are not unclean. Therefore, you may be satisfied, that your cohabitation is lawful marriage. But to urge the church membership of children, or their title to any church privilege, as proof, that the unbeliever is sanctified to the believer, so that it is lawful for them to dwell together, would have been quite irrelevant.†

The question returns, Is there any evidence, that the Jewish and Christian churches are the same? or that the children of believers are members of the Christian church, as the children of Jews were members of the Jewish church? We cannot believe without evidence. And clear evidence is requisite to support a sentiment, which counteracts the first

* 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

† The interpretation here adopted, is strengthened by the use of the word ἁγιασμος, in 1 Thes. iv. 3, 4, 7, and approved by AMBROSE, who says, 'The children are holy, because they are born of lawful marriage,' MUSCULUS and MELANCTHON, in Trombe's *Exercitation*, p. 11, 12, 13; CAMERARIUS, VATABLUS and CAJETAN, in loc. VELTHUYSIUS, *Opera*, Tom. i p. 801; SUARES and VASQUES, apud Chamieri *Panstrat.* Tom. iv. L. v. C. x. § 50; DIETERICUS, apud Wolfii *Curæ*, in loc. See also Dr MACKNIGHT, who says, 'I, therefore, think with Elsner, that the words in this verse, have neither a federal nor a moral meaning, but are used in the idiom of the Hebrews,' &c. *Translation of the Apost. Epist.* Note on 1 Cor. vii. 14.

impressions we receive from the word of God; still clearer, to support a sentiment, fraught with consequences embarrassing and dangerous.

Are we ready to acknowledge the children of believers, as members of the Christian church, in the same sense, as the children of Jews were members of the Jewish church? Are we ready to acknowledge their right to the Lord's supper, as soon, at least, as they are capable of discerning the Lord's body? and the consequent obligation of the church, to require their attendance, and to discipline them, if they neglect to attend? To consider and treat them, as members of the church, until formally excluded; and to consider and treat them as not members, until formally admitted, are very different things. The latter is the uniform practice of Protestant dissenters in England, and their descendants, the churches in America; the former only is consistent with the principle that the children of believers are church members. But it most evidently tends to confound the church with the world, and, it is to be feared, is the most pernicious practice, that ever infested and laid waste the vineyard of the Lord.

3. An attempt has been sometimes made, to support the practice of infant baptism, on the ground of the Jewish proselyte baptism. The argument is this. The Jews were in the habit of receiving proselytes, both adults and infants, by baptism, as well as by circumcision. Christ and his apostles being acquainted with this practice, when he commanded them, *in general terms*, to teach all nations, baptizing them, he must have intended, and they must

have understood him to intend, that baptism to which they had been accustomed, the baptism of infants as well as adults.

This argument would have some force, were there any sufficient evidence, that the Jews, in the time of Christ, or in any preceding age, admitted proselytes by baptism. But there is not the slightest evidence of Jewish proselyte baptism, in the Old Testament, or in the New, and therefore, no sufficient evidence; for if we admit 'the perfection of scripture, as a Christian's only rule of faith and practice,' we cannot imagine, that we are left to discover the truth of a doctrine, as we sometimes are, the meaning of an original word, from uninspired writings; we cannot imagine, with Dr. Wall and others, that proselyte baptism, of which there is no trace in the word of God, is the proper ground, on which to support infant baptism. It may, however, afford satisfaction to the minds of some, to be further assured that there is no intimation of proselyte baptism, in the apocryphal writings, or in the works of Philo and Josephus, who both wrote concerning the laws and customs of the Jews, or in any other ecclesiastical writings, about the time of Christ, or in the Targums, or Chaldee Paraphrases, or in the works of the Christian fathers, for the first three or four centuries. The first mention of proselyte baptism is in the Jewish Talmuds, which were composed between the second and fifth centuries; and the manner, in which it is mentioned in the Talmuds, shows, that it was then a novel and questionable practice. Accordingly, though some learned Pedobaptists, in their zeal to find some foundation for infant baptism,

have suffered themselves to be imposed on, by the Jewish rabbins, others have the candor to express themselves, in the following manner:

Dr. JENNINGS. 'But after all, it remains to be proved, not only that Christian baptism was instituted in the room of proselyte baptism, but that the Jews had any such baptism, in our Saviour's time. The earliest accounts we have of it, are in the Mishna and Gemara; the former compiled, as the Jews assert, by Rabbi Juda, in the second century; though learned men, in general, bring it several centuries lower; the latter, not till the seventh century. There is not a word of it in Philo, nor yet in Josephus, though he gives an account of the proselyting of the Idumeans, by Hyrcanus.' *

Dr. OWEN.' 'The institution of the rite of baptism is no where mentioned in the Old Testament. There is no example of it in those ancient records; nor was it ever used in the admission of proselytes while the Jewish church continued. No mention of it occurs in Philo, in Josephus, in Jesus, the son of Sirach, nor in the Evangelical History. This Rabbinical opinion, therefore, owes its rise to the Tannercæ, or Ante-Mishnical doctors, after the destruction of their city. The opinion of some learned men, therefore, about the transferring of a Jewish baptismal rite (which in reality did not then exist,) by the Lord Jesus, for the use of his disciples, *is destitute of all probability.*' †

Dr. LARDNER. 'As for the baptism of Jewish proselytes, I take it to be a *mere fiction of the Rabbins*,

* *Jewish Antiq.* Vol. I. p. 136. † *Theologoumena*, L. v. Digress. iv.

by whom we have suffered ourselves to be imposed upon.'*

Provided that the command of Christ to teach did not limit his subsequent command to such as were taught, it is, doubtless, fair reasoning, that when Christ in general terms, commanded his apostles to baptize, he must have intended, and they must have understood him to intend, that kind of baptism, to which they had been accustomed. So far the argument would be good. But there is no sufficient evidence, that the baptism, to which they had been accustomed, was proselyte baptism of adults and infants. To what kind of baptism, then, had they been accustomed? We know of none, but the baptism of John. But John did not baptize infants. His baptism was a baptism of repentance, and acknowledgment of Him that was to come, and, therefore, a baptism of adults only. This was the baptism, which the disciples of Jesus administered, in the beginning of his ministry, as it is written, 'that Jesus *made and baptized more disciples* than John; though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.'† The baptism of adults was that, to which alone they had been accustomed; and therefore, if Christ, in general terms, commanded his apostles to baptize, he must have intended, and they must have understood him to intend, the baptism of adults only.

4. The following quotations present our view the last ground to which Pedobaptists resort.

* *Letters to and from Dr. Doddridge*, Let. lxxxix. p. 275. But for a full examination of the subject, see Dr. GILL'S *Dissertation concerning the Baptism of Jewish proselytes.* † John iv. 1, 2.

BOSSUET. 'Experience has shown, that all the attempts of the Reformed to confound the Anabaptists, by the scripture, have been weak; and, therefore, *they are, at last, obliged to allege to them the practice of the church.*' *

CHAMBERS. 'As none but adults are capable of believing, they' (the German Baptists,) 'argued, that no others are capable of baptism; especially, as there is no passage, in all the New Testament, where the baptism of infants is clearly enjoined. Calvin, and other writers against them, are pretty much embarrassed, to answer this argument; and *are obliged to have recourse to tradition, and the practice of the primitive church.*' †

Also the *Oxford Divines*, in a convocation, held one thousand, six hundred and forty-seven, acknowledged, 'that, without the consentaneous judgment of the universal church, they should be at a loss, when they are called upon for proof, in the point of infant baptism.' ‡

What, then, is the evidence from antiquity, in favor of infant baptism?

It has been already stated, that the writers of the New Testament are silent on this subject, whether recording the formation of the primitive churches, or addressing epistles to those churches. They frequently mention the baptism of believers; but preserve a profound silence on the baptism of infants.

The Christian writers of the first century, who immediately succeeded the apostles, Barnabas, Hermas,

* In Stennet's *Answer to Russen*, p. 184.
† *Cyclopedia*, Art. *Anabaptists*.
‡ In Lawson's *Baptismalogia*, p. 116

Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, and Polycarp, usually called, by way of distinction, *apostolical fathers*, frequently mention the baptism of believers; but, like the inspired penmen, are entirely silent on the subject of infant baptism.

The Christian writers of the second century, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Tatian, Irenæus, and Clemens Alexandrinus, frequently mention the baptism of believers; but, like the inspired penmen, and the apostolical fathers, never mention infant baptism.

There is, indeed, in the writings of Irenæus, one passage, which has been adduced in proof of this practice: 'Christ passed through all the ages of man, that he might save all by himself, that is, all who, by him, are regenerated to God, infants, and little ones, and children, and youths, and persons advanced in age.' *

As the word translated *regenerated*, sometimes in the writings of the christian fathers, denotes *baptism*, some have supposed, that, in this passage, it may be properly translated *baptized*. The passage would then stand, Christ came to save all by himself—that is, *all who, by him, are baptized to God*, &c.

There are two considerations, which forbid this translation. First: It makes the passage unintelligible. It is intelligible, that all who are saved, are *regenerated* by Christ; but what possible meaning can be attached to the assertion, that all who are saved, *are baptized by Christ to God*? On what principle of interpretation is it justifiable, to reject the natural, common meaning of a word, when, at the

* *Contra Hæres.* L. ii. C. xxii.

same time, it perfectly accords with the scope of the passage, and to adopt a figurative meaning, which renders the passage unintelligible?

Secondly: This interpretation will not accord with the strain of the writer's discourse; or, in the words of Le Clerc, 'we see nothing here concerning baptism; nor is there any thing relating to it, in the immediately preceding or following words.' *

Now this testimony, uncertain as it must be considered, at the best, and given at the close of the second century, is the first testimony that is insisted on by learned Pedobaptists. † Dr. Wall admits, 'This is the first express mention we have met with of infants baptized.' ‡ But though Dr. Wall calls it *express mention*, it is generally given up as very uncertain. §

MONTHLY REVIEW. 'The authorities produced, are Justin Martyr and Irenæus, in the second century. With respect to the testimony of Justin, it requires very considerable ingenuity to make it, in any view, an argument in favor of infant baptism. There is a passage in Irenæus more to the purpose; *but the passage is equivocal.*' ||

The first Christian writer, in the beginning of the third century, Tertullian of Carthage, the oldest Latin father, whose writings are extant, opposed the baptism of infants, which in the words of Professor

* *Hist. Eccles.* Secul. ii. Ann. 180. § 33. p. 778.

† Passages have been sometimes cited from the Ecclesiastic Hierarchy, the Clementina, the Apostolic Constitutions, and the Questions and Responses to the Orthodox; but these works are denounced by the learned, as decidedly spurious. See Drs. Cave, Wall, Mosheim and Maclaine.

‡ *Hist. of Inf. Bap.* Part i. C. iii. p. 16.

§ See particularly, VENEMÆ *Hist. Eccles.* Tom. iii. Secul. ii. § 109.

|| For May, 1784. p. 394.

Venema, 'he certainly would not have done, if it had been a tradition, and a public custom of the church, seeing he was very tenacious of traditions; nor had it been a tradition, would he have failed to mention it.' * His words lead us to conclude, that infant baptism was then a novel practice, just beginning and approved by very few.

In his treatise on baptism, against the Quintilianists, after condemning rash baptisms, and maintaining the propriety and advantages of delay, especially in the case of little children, he proceeds thus: 'What necessity is there, that sponsors should be brought into danger; since, by reason of death, they may fail in their engagements, or be disappointed, by the intervention of a bad disposition? Our Lord indeed says, 'Forbid them not to come to me.' But let them come when they are growing up —when they are learning—when they are taught for what purpose they come. Let them be made Christians, when they are able to know Christ. Why does that innocent age hasten to baptism?' †

Several quotations concerning infant baptism have been made from the writings of Origen, who flourished in the former part of the third century. But his original works are not now extant. These quotations are taken from a very corrupt Latin version, made by Ruffinus, who, as Quenstedius observes, 'has used so great a liberty' (as he himself acknowledges in his prefaces, and for which Jerome reproves him,) that he retrenched, added, and altered, whatever he considered as deserving to be cashiered, added or changed; so that the reader

* *Hist. Eccles.* Secul. ii. § 108. † *Lib. de Baptismo*, C. xviii.

is frequently uncertain, whether he read Origen or Ruffinus.' * And Grotius, also, concerning the sentiments of Origen, says, 'Some things ascribed to him were penned by an uncertain author, and some things were interpolated. What Origen thought about the final punishment of the wicked, is difficult from his writings to be asserted, all things are so interpolated by Ruffinus.' †

The only passage from the Greek of Origen, which is produced in proof of this practice, contains a clause, which represents the infants, as *desiring the sincere milk of the word.* Therefore Dr. Wall acknowledges, that this does 'very much puzzle the cause, and make it doubtful, whether Origen be to be there understood of infants in age, or of such Christian men, as are endued with the innocence and simplicity of infants.' ‡

This practice, however, probably commenced in the latter part of the second century, and gradually gained ground in the third. As the sentiment prevailed, that baptism was necessary to salvation, parents became more anxious to have their children baptized, especially when sick and in danger of death.

VITRINGA. 'The ancient christian church, from the highest antiquity, after the apostolic times, appears generally to have thought, that baptism is absolutely necessary for all that would be saved by the grace of Jesus Christ. It was, therefore, customary, in the ancient church, if infants were greatly afflicted, and in danger of death, or if parents were

* *Dialog. de Patriis Illust. Doct. Script. Virorum*, p. 632.
† Apud Poli *Synops.* ad Matt. xix. 14, and xxv. 46.
‡ *Hist. of Inf. Bap.* Part i. p. 32.

affected with a singular concern about the salvation of their children, to present their infants, or children, in their minority, to the bishop, to be baptized. But if these reasons did not urge them, they thought it better, and more for the interest of minors, that their baptism should be deferred, till they arrived at a more advanced age; which custom was not yet abolished, in the time of Augustine, though he vehemently urged the necessity of baptism, while, with all his might, he defended the doctrines of grace against Pelagius.' *

SALMASIUS. 'An opinion prevailed that no one could be saved, without being baptized; and *for that reason, the custom arose of baptizing infants.*' †

So unsettled, however, was the practice in Africa, in the middle of the third century, that, at the suggestion of Fidus, an African bishop, it was made a question before the council of Carthage, in which Cyprian presided, whether infants might be baptized before the eighth day. The council decided in the affirmative, for the following reasons:

'The mercy and grace of God should be denied to none. For if the Lord says in his gospel, 'The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them,' how ought we to do our utmost, that no soul be lost. Spiritual circumcision should not be impeded by carnal circumcision. If even to the foulest offenders, when they afterwards believe, remission of sins is granted, and none is prohibited from baptism and grace, how much more should an infant be admitted. Besides God would be a re-

* *Observat. Sac.* Tom. i. L. ii. C. vi. § 9.
† *Epist. ad Justum Pacium.*

specter of persons, if he denied to infants what he grants to adults. Did not the prophet Elisha lie upon a child, and put his mouth on his mouth, and his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands? Now the spiritual sense of this is, that infants are equal to men. But if you refuse to baptize them, you destroy this equality and are partial.' *

We here see the primitive grounds of infant baptism, and from this reasoning, may form some idea of the wisdom and judgment of that 'holy assembly' — the most ancient bulwark of Pedobaptism — on whose integrity and infallibility, Mr. Milner seems almost disposed to rest the whole defence of the cause.

Let us proceed to the fourth century. Even at this period, we find Gregory Nazianzen, bishop of Constantinople, 'metropolitan of all Greece and the oracle of the catholic world,' expressing himself, on the subject of infant baptism in the following words: 'But say some, what is your opinion of infants, who are not capable of judging either of the grace of baptism, or of the damage sustained by the want of it; shall we baptize them too? By all means, *if there be any apparent danger*. For it were better, that they were sanctified, without knowing it, than that they should die without being sealed and initiated. *As for others*, I give my opinion, that when they are three years of age or thereabouts (for then they are able to hear and answer some of the mystical words, and although they do not fully understand, they may receive impressions,) they be sanc-

* CYPRIAN, *Epist.* lxvi. ad Fidum.

tified, both soul and body, by the great mystery of initiation.' *

It is evident, however, from the writings of Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine, that, in the latter part of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth, infant baptism very generally prevailed, — so much so, that Augustine, the latest of those writers, adduced it in proof of the doctrine of original sin, in these words: — 'Infant baptism the whole church practises; it was not instituted by councils, but was ever in use;' and his opponent Pelagius admitted, that 'baptism ought to be administered to infants' — knowing probably, that by stemming the popular torrent, he should lose more, in point of credit, than he should gain in point of argument.

When Augustine says, that the whole church practised infant baptism, did he mean, that this was *the universal practice of the church*?

The testimonies which have been already produced, and the well known fact that through the whole of his life, he found it necessary to urge and enforce the baptism of infants, renders this interpretation inadmissible. We must conclude, that infant baptism, in the time of Augustine, though not yet considered a necessary duty, was generally tolerated, nor ever refused to those parents, who desired it for their children. Further than this it is impossible to stretch the meaning of Augustine, without making him contradict his contemporaries and himself.

That he should suppose this practice to have been

* In Robinson's *Hist. of Bap.* C. xxiv.

'ever in use,' is not strange, when we consider, that, in the words of Hospinian, 'in the time of Augustine, it was commonly believed, that whatever was received by the church, as a devotional custom, proceeded from apostolical tradition, and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.' *

But however prevalent infant baptism had become, in the time of Augustine, he thought it would not be amiss to instigate the Milevitan council, to explain and encourage the practice a little, in the following gentle and persuasive terms: — 'It is the pleasure of all the bishops present in this holy synod to order, that whoever denieth, that infants newly born of their mother, are to be baptized, or saith that baptism is administered for the remission of their own sins, but not on account of original sin derived from Adam, and to be expiated by the laver of regeneration, be accursed.' †

His motives were at least humane; for he says in another place, that 'not only persons, who have come to the use of reason, but also little children, and infants newly born, if they die without baptism, do go into everlasting fire.' ‡

* *Hist. Sacram.* L. ii. p. 41.

† In Robinson's *Hist. of Bap.* C. xxiii.

‡ In Davye *on Baptism*, p. 67. From this period, every century has presented a succession of witnesses to the truth of the Baptist sentiments, as well as numberless decrees of popes, and kings, and councils, denouncing the severest penalties on this 'pernicious sect.'

Cardinal Hosius, *President of the Council of Trent.* 'If the truth of religion were to be judged of by the readiness and cheerfulness which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer or surer than that of the Anabaptists; since there have been none, for these twelve hundred years past, that have been more grievously punished, or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone, and even offered themselves to, the most cruel sorts of punishment, than these people.' 'The Anabaptists are a pernicious sect, of which kind the Waldensian brethren seem also to have been. Nor is this heresy a

The correctness of these statements, concerning the practice of the primitive church, is confirmed by the following testimonies; the first, furnished by an apostle, and the rest, as usual, by Pedobaptist authors.

St. PAUL. 'As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.' *

ERASMUS. 'Paul does not seem' (in Rom. v. 14.) 'to treat about infants. — *It was not yet the custom for infants to be baptized.*' †

LUTHER. 'It cannot be proved by the sacred scripture, that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles.' ‡

M. *De La* ROQUE. 'The primitive church did not baptize infants: and the learned Grotius proves it, in his annotations on the Gospel.' §

LUDOVICUS VIVES. 'No one, in former times, was admitted to the sacred baptistery, except he was of age, understood what the mystical water meant, desired to be washed in it, and expressed that desire more than once.' ‖

modern thing; for it existed in the time of Augustine.' In Rees' *Reply to Walker*, p. 220; and apud Schyn *Hist. Mennonit.* p. 135.

Dr. MOSHEIM. 'The true origin of that sect, which acquired the denomination of Anabaptists, by their administering anew the rite of baptism, to those who came over to their communion, and derived that of *Mennonites*, from the famous man, to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, *is hid in the remotest depths of antiquity*, and is, of consequence, extremely difficult to be ascertained.' *Eccles. Hist.* Vol. iv. p. 439.

See also DANVERS *on Baptism*, REES' *Reply to Walker*, and ROBINSON's *History and Researches.*

Concerning Dr. Gill's supposed concession, that he was not able to find any instance of an opposer of infant baptism, from the fourth to the eleventh century, See Dr. BALDWIN's *Series of Letters to Dr. Worcester*, Let. xxiv. p. 232.

* Gal. iii. 27. † *Annotat.* ad Rom. v. 14.
‡ In A. R's. *Vanity of Infant Baptism*, Part ii. p. 8.
§ In Stennett's *Answer to Russen*, p. 188.
‖ *Annotat. in* Aug. *de Civ. Dei.* L. i. C. xxxvii.

CHAMBERS. 'It appears, that in the primitive times none were baptized but adults.' *

Bp. BARLOW. 'I do believe and know, that there is neither precept nor example in scripture, for pedobaptism, nor any just evidence for it, for about two hundred years after Christ.' †

SALMASIUS and SUICERUS. 'In the first two centuries, no one was baptized, except, being instructed in the faith and acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer; because of those words, *He that believeth, and is baptized.*' ‡

M. FORMEY. 'They baptized, from this time,' (the latter end of the second century) 'infants, as well as adults.' §

CURCELLŒUS. '*The baptism of infants, in the first two centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown;* but in the third and fourth, was allowed by some few. In the fifth and following ages, it was generally received. The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the third age after Christ was born. *In the former ages, no trace of it appears,* — and it was introduced without the command of Christ.' ‖

RIGALTIUS. 'In the Acts of the Apostles, we read that both men and women were baptized, when they believed the gospel preached by Philip; without any mention being made of infants. *From the apostolic age, therefore, to the time of Tertullian, the matter is doubtful.*' ¶

* *Cyclopædia*, Art. *Baptism.* † *Letter to Mr. J. Tombs.*
‡ *Epist. ad Justum Pacium. Thesaur. Eccles.* sub. voce. Συναξις, Tom. ii. p. 1136.
§ *Abridg. Eccles. Hist.* Vol. i. p. 33.
‖ *Institut. Relig. Christ.* L. i. C. xii. *Dissert. Secund. de Pecc. Orig.* § 56. ¶ In Stennett's *Answer to Russen*, p. 74.

VENEMA. 'Tertullian has no where mentioned pedobaptism among the traditions of the church, nor even among the customs of the church, that were publicly received, and usually observed; nay, he plainly intimates that, in his time, it was yet a doubtful affair. Nothing can be affirmed with certainty, concerning the custom of the church before Tertullian; seeing there is not any where, in more ancient writers, that I know of, undoubted mention of infant baptism. Justin Martyr, in his second apology, when describing baptism, mentions only that of adults. I conclude, therefore, that pedobaptism cannot be certainly proved to have been practised before the times of Tertullian; and that there were persons in his age, who desired their infants might be baptized, especially, when they were afraid of their dying without baptism; which opinion Tertullian opposed, and by so doing, he intimates, that pedobaptism began to prevail. These are the things that may be affirmed, with apparent certainty, concerning the antiquity of infant baptism, after the times of the apostles; *for more are maintained without solid foundation.*' *

GROTIUS. 'It seems to me, that the baptism of infants was, of old, much more frequently practised in Africa, than in Asia, or other parts of the world; and with a certain opinion of the greater necessity of it. For you will not find, in any of the councils, a more ancient mention of this custom, than in the council of Carthage.' †

EPISCOPIUS. 'Pedobaptism was not accounted a necessary rite, till it was determined so to be, in the

* *Hist. Eccles.* Tom. iii. Secul. ii. § 108, 109.
† *Annotat.* in Matt. xix. 14.

Milevitan council, held in the year four hundred and eighteen.' *

Dr. DODDRIDGE. 'It is indeed surprising, that nothing more express is to be met with in antiquity upon this subject.' †

But how was it possible, that infant baptism could have been quietly introduced, in the early ages of Christianity, unsupported by apostolic authority, and the previous practice of the church? To the declamations of Towgood and others on this subject, the Baptists think it quite sufficient to reply, by asking, How were episcopacy and infant communion, and the use of sponsors or god-parents,‡ and a great variety of usages and ceremonies, introduced, without 'a whisper of opposition,' and suffered to pave the way to the complete enthronement of the man of sin? The truth is, that as soon as the spirit of inspiration withdrew from the earth, a multitude of errors and corruptions rushed in and deluged the church. This is indeed mortifying to human nature, and apparently unaccountable; but the facts are never disputed, unless a favorite hypothesis is in danger. Consider the case of episcopacy. It can claim much higher authority than even infant baptism. For while the latter is not mentioned, by any writer, in the first two centuries, frequent references to episcopacy, or the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, occur in the writings of the second century, and even in the epistles of Ignatius, one of the apostolical fathers. Professor Campbell, *an opposer of episcopacy*, though he questions the integrity of

* *Institut. Theolog.* L. iv. C. xiv. † *Lectures*, p. 522.

‡ Dr. WALL. 'There is no time or age of the church, in which there is any appearance, that infants were ordinarily baptized, without sponsors or god-fathers.' *Def. of Hist.* § 22.

the epistles of Ignatius, admits, that 'before the middle of the second century, a subordination in the ecclesiastical polity, which may be called primitive episcopacy, and may be considered the first step of the hierarchy, began to prevail very generally throughout the Christian world.' *

Suppose, therefore, that even the quotation from Irenæus, at the close of the second century, and those from Origen, in the third, are admitted to be relevant and genuine (and these are the very earliest that are insisted on), what ground is gained by an anti-episcopalian Pedobaptist?

But the case of infant communion deserves more particular consideration. The same evidence can be adduced, in favor of the antiquity of this practice, as of that of infant baptism. And in the article of opposition, infant communion has the decided advantage: For while there appears to have been some opposition to the introduction of infant baptism, by Tertullian, Gregory Nazianzen, and others, nothing of the kind appears in the case of infant communion.

As these points, if established, must, in the minds of those who reject infant communion, completely invalidate the argument from antiquity, in favor of infant baptism, and as these points must be established by testimony, independently of argumentation, permit me to introduce the following quotations.

SALMASIUS and SUICERUS. 'Because the eucharist was given to adult catechumens, when they were washed with holy baptism, without any space

* *Eccles. Hist.* Sect. vii.

of time intervening, this also was done to infants, *after pedobaptism was introduced.*' *

BUDDŒUS. 'It is manifest, that in the ancient church, it was usual to give the eucharist to infants; which custom arose about the third century, and continued in the western church, to the beginning of the twelfth century, as Quenstedius shows. This custom seems to have prevailed, first in the African church, and to have been propagated thence to other churches of the west. Certainly, we no where find it more frequently mentioned, than in the writings of Cyprian, of Augustine, and of Paulinus. The error seems to have arisen, from a false opinion concerning the absolute necessity of the eucharist; and it has been observed by learned men, that this arose from the words of Christ, John vi. 53, not well understood.' †

HOSPINIANUS. 'The Lord's supper was given to the infants of believers, in the time of Pope Innocent the first, of Cyprian, and of Augustine; as well in Europe, as in Asia and Africa, and that as necessary to salvation. Jerome, Augustine and other fathers, testify, that they who were baptized, not only adults, but also infants, without any delay, received the Lord's supper in both kinds.' ‡

CHILLINGWORTH. 'St. Augustine, I am sure, held the communicating of infants, as much apostolic tradition, as the baptizing of them. The eucharist's necessity for infants—was taught by the consent of the eminent fathers of some ages, with-

* *Thesaur. Eccles.* sub. voce Συναξις,
† *Theolog. Dogmat.* L. v. C. i. § 19.
‡ *Hist. Sacram.* L. ii. C. ii. p. 51.

out any opposition from any of their contemporaries; and was delivered by them, not as doctors, but as witnesses; not as their opinion, but as apostolic tradition.'*

Dr. PRIESTLEY. 'It is remarkable, that, in all Christian antiquity, we always find, that communion in the Lord's supper immediately followed baptism. And no such thing occurs, as that of any person having a right to one of these ordinances, and not to the other.'†

VENEMA. 'In the ancient church, those two sacraments' (baptism and the Lord's supper) 'in respect of the subjects, were never separated, the one from the other. In the thirteenth century, baptized infants ceased to be admitted to the eucharist, because it began to be administered under one kind.'‡

Dr. WALL. '—That the Roman church, about the year one thousand, *entertaining the doctrine of transubstantiation*, let fall the custom of giving the holy elements to infants; and the other western churches mostly following their example, did the like, upon the same account; but that the Greeks, not having the same doctrine, continued, and do still continue, the custom of communicating infants.'§

HALLET. 'The late Rev. Mr. Pierce has demonstrably proved, that it was the ancient practice, to give the eucharist to children, in an unanswerable essay on this subject. And as no one has, after many years, attempted to answer him, I may well here take it for granted, that infants, in the primi-

* *Relig. of Protest.* Answer to Pref. § 10, and Chap. iii. § 44.
† *Address on giving the Lord's Supper to Children*, p. 10.
‡ *Hist. Eccles.* Secul. ii. § 100; Secul. xii. § 164.
§ *Hist of Inf. Bap.* p. 517.

tive church, were admitted to the communion of Christians.' *

Let me conclude this part of the discourse, by inquiring, Why do not the advocates of infant baptism, become advocates of infant communion?

Is the scripture silent concerning the latter ordinance? It is equally silent concerning the former. Are infants incapable of remembering Christ, of examining themselves, and of discerning the Lord's body, which are required of those who receive the supper? They are equally incapable of repenting and believing, which are required of those who receive baptism. Every argument which is brought to prove, that the requirement to repent and believe does not exclude infants from the one ordinance, will equally prove, that the requirement to examine one's self and discern the Lord's body, does not exclude them from the other ordinance.

Every argument also, which is urged in support of the one ordinance, may be urged, with equal plausibility, in support of the other.

Ought infants to be baptized, because, under a former dispensation they were circumcised? So also, because under a former dispensation they partook of the passover, † they ought now to be admitted to communion. Ought they to be baptized,

* In Dr. Austin's *Econ. of the Church*, C. xii. p. 243.

† After the tabernacle, where alone the passover could be eaten, was established at Jerusalem, young children on account of the distance, were not *required* to partake of the passover, till they had attained the age of twelve years. But it would be gross to infer, that previously to that age, they had no right to partake of it, and did not partake, whenever presented. That they partook of the first passover, is admitted by all parties. See Dr. Th. Scott, on Exod. xii. 43—45.

because they are connected with their parents, in covenant with God? For the same reason, they ought, with their parents, to be admitted to communion. Ought they to be baptized, because they are members of the visible church? For the same reason, they ought to be admitted to communion. Ought they to be baptized, because Christ commanded little children to be brought to him, and declared, that of such is the kingdom of heaven? For the same reason, they ought to be admitted to communion. Ought they to be baptized, because they are not unclean, but holy? For the same reason, they ought to be admitted to communion. Does it lessen the privileges, which the church anciently enjoyed, to withhold baptism from infants? And does it not equally lessen those privileges, to debar infants from communion? Is it harsh and injurious to exclude infants from baptism? And is it not equally harsh and injurious to exclude them from communion?

Accordingly, Dr. Williams, the opponent of Mr. Booth, inquires, 'Are not the same reasons, which are brought for infant baptism, in like manner, applicable to infant communion? And will not the objections against the latter, admit of the same answer, as those against the former?'*

The reasons stated in both parts of this discourse, lead us to the conclusion, that *the immersion of a professing believer, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is the only christian baptism.*

'He that believeth and is baptized, shall be sav-

* *Notes* on Mr. Morrice's *Social Relig.* p. 78.

ed; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.' * To believe in Christ is necessary to salvation; and to be baptized is the instituted method of professing our belief. It is, therefore, not only an infinitely important question to all men, whether they believe in Christ; but it is also a very important question to all Christians, whether they have been baptized.

If you love Christ, you cannot consider this question unimportant. You will be desirous of discovering the will of him whom you love, and of testifying your love, by joyfully obeying. '*If ye love me,*' said Jesus, '*keep my commandments.*' † '*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*' ‡

If, when your mind adverts to this question, you fear the consequences of an examination, and dread those sacrifices, which a discovery that you have been mistaken may enforce on your conscience; or if you feel the influence of long established sentiments, and imagine, that the subject is too dark and intricate for your investigation; look to the Son of God, who hesitated not to make the greatest sacrifices, and to endure the most painful sufferings for you; and look up to the Father of lights, to send the Holy Spirit according to the promise of his Son, to guide you into all truth.

Especially, my brethren, diligently use the means of discovering the truth. Put yourselves in the way of evidence. Indulge free examination. Though the sun shines with perfect clearness, you will never see that light which others enjoy, if you confine yourselves in a cavern, which the beams of the sun cannot penetrate. Be assured that there is suffi-

* Mark xvi. 16. † John xiv. 15. ‡ John xv. 14.

your minds a sufficient apology for addressing you at this time.

You will readily believe me, when I say, that on leaving my country, I little imagined, that I should ever become a Baptist. I had not indeed candidly examined the subject of baptism; but I had strong prejudices against the sect, that is every where spoken against.

It was on board the vessel, in prospect of my future life among the heathen, that I was led to investigate this important subject. I was going forth to proclaim the glad news of salvation through Jesus Christ. I hoped, that my ministrations would be blessed to the conversion of souls. In that case, I felt that I should have no hesitation concerning my duty to the converts, it being plainly commanded in scripture, that such are to be baptized, and received into church fellowship. But how, thought I, am I to treat the unconverted children and domestics of the converts? Are they to be considered members of the church of Christ, by virtue of the conversion of the head of their family, or not? If they are, ought I not to treat them as such? After they are baptized, can I consistently set them aside, as aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, until they are readmitted? If they are not to be considered members of the church, can I consistently administer to them the initiating ordinance of the church?

If I adopt the Abrahamic covenant, and consider the Christian church a continuation of the Abrahamic or Jewish system, I must adopt the former part of the alternative. I must consider the children and domestics of professors, as members of the

church, and treat them accordingly. Abraham, according to the terms of the covenant which God made with him, circumcised not only his own sons, but all the males, that were born in his house, or bought with money. His male descendants, in the line of Isaac and Jacob, were entitled to the same ordinance, by virture of natural descent; and, together with their domestics, composed the ancient church, and were entitled to all its privileges. This is put beyond a doubt, by the single fact, that, in the Abrahamic community, or the society of Israel, there was no separate party, calling themselves, by way of distinction, *the church*, and saying to others, who were equally circumcised with themselves, Stand by, touch not the passover, we are holier than you. No. All the members of the community, or nation, were of course members of the church. They were entitled to church membership, by birth or purchase. Their church membership was recognized, or they were initiated into the church, by circumcision; and in subsequent life, they partook of the passover, which was the standing sacrament of the church analogous to the Lord's supper, and enjoyed all the rights and privileges of the church, unless they were excommunicated, or, in scriptural language, cut off from the people.' *

* If any one should be inclined to doubt the right of circumcised children to the passover, let him consider the following:

Witsius. 'In those companies' (that partook of the passover) 'men and women sat down together, old men and young, whole and sick, masters and servants, in fine, every Jew that could eat a morsel of flesh, not excluding even young children.' *Œcon. Foed.* L. iv. C. ix. § 14.

Dr. Scott. Every person in each household, including women and children, ate this first passover, none being excepted, but uncircumcised males; and afterwards all, who were not ceremonially unclean, partook of it. The women and children were not

Now let me be consistent. Since I am exhorted to walk in the steps of father Abraham, let me follow him with the same faithfulness which procured him eminent praise. Let me not adopt some parts of his covenant, and reject others, as suits my own convenience, or accords with the notions, in which I have been educated. Nor let me complain for want of example and prescription. Behold the established church of England. She proves herself, in many respects, a worthy daughter of the Abrahamic or Jewish church. She receives into her charitable bosom, all the descendants of professors; and all those who, though not of her seed, belong to the families of professors; and these collectively come, in process of time, to comprise the whole nation. This is truly Abrahamic. This is the very system, which the ancestors of the Jewish race, and their succeeding rulers and priests uniformly maintained. And if I claim an interest in the Abrahamic covenant, and consider the Christian church a continuation of the Jewish, why should I hesitate to prove myself a true child of Abraham, and a consistent Christian, by adopting this system, in all its parts, and introducing it among the heathen?

But I considered again — How does this system accord with the account of the church of Christ, given in the New Testament? It appeared to me, from the manner in which this church commenced

indeed commanded to go up to the tabernacle, where it was celebrated; but when they did, they joined in this sacred feast.' Note on Exodus xii. 43—45.

After the tabernacle, where alone the passover could be eaten, was established at Jerusalem, young children, on account of distance, not on account of any personal disqualification, were seldom brought to partake of the passover. This neglect, however, was not allowed after they had attained the age of twelve years.

and was continued, from the character of its members, and in fine, from its whole economy, so far as detailed in the New Testament, that it was a company, consisting of select individuals, men and women, who gave credible evidence of being disciples of Christ; and that it had no regard to natural descent, or accidental connection with the families of professors.

When I proceeded to consider certain passages, which are thought to favor the Pedobaptist system, I found nothing satisfactory.

The sanctification, which St. Paul ascribes to the children of a believer, (1 Cor. vii. 14.) I found that he ascribed to the unbelieving parent also; and therefore, whatever be the meaning of the passage, it could have no respect to church membership, or a right to church ordinances.

The declaration of St. Peter, 'The promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,' (Acts ii. 39,) appeared not to bear at all on the point in hand, because the apostle does not command his hearers to have their children baptized, or acknowledged members of the church, but to repent and be baptized themselves. There is indeed a promise made to their children, and to all others that God shall call; but it does not follow, that they were to procure the baptism of their children, or of those that were afar off, until they gave evidence that God had called them.

When Christ said, concerning little children, that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' (Matt. xix. 14,) it appeared to me, that his comparison had respect,

not to the age or size of little children, but to the humility and docility which distinguish them from adults. This seemed to be put beyond a doubt, by his own explanation, in a similar passage, in which he says, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' (Mat. xviii. 3.)

The baptism of households, which is mentioned in three instances, I could not consider, as affording any evidence one way or the other, because, in a household, there may be infants and unbelieving domestics, and there may not. Besides, I discovered some circumstances in each of the cases, which led me to conclude, that the members of the households were real believers. They are expressly said to be so in the case of the jailer (Acts xvi. 34), and the same is evidently implied, in the case of Stephanas, when it is said, that they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints (1 Cor. i. 16).

In a word, I could not find a single intimation, in the New Testament, that the children and domestics of believers were members of the church, or entitled to any church ordinance, in consequence of the profession of the head of their family. Everything discountenanced this idea. When baptism was spoken of, it was always in connection with believing. None but believers were commanded to be baptized; and it did not appear to my mind that any others were baptized.

Here, then, appeared a striking difference between the Abrahamic, and the Christian systems. The one recognized the membership of children, domestics and remote descendants of professors,

and tended directly to the establishment of a national religion. The other appeared to be a selective system, acknowledging none, as members of the church, but such as gave credible evidence of believing in Christ.

This led me to suspect, that these two systems, so evidently different, could not be one and the same. And now the light began to dawn. The more I read, and the more I meditated on the subject, the more clearly it appeared to me, that all my errors and difficulties had originated, in confounding these two systems. I began to see, that since the very nature and constitution of the church of Christ excluded infants and unregenerate domestics, repentance and faith being always represented as necessary to constitute a disciple, we had no right to expect any directions for, or any examples of, the initiation of such unqualified persons into the church. To search for such directions and examples in the New Testament would be, as if the citizen of a republic should go to search his national code, for laws concerning the royal family, which, by the very nature and constitution of a republic, is excluded. Suppose, that such a citizen, disappointed in his search, should have recourse to the constitution and laws of a neigboring monarchy, for the desired information. This, it appeared to me, would aptly represent the proceeding of those who, unable to find in the New Testament, satisfactory proof of the right of infants, or unregenerate domestics, should have recourse to the Abrahamic and Jewish codes.

At length, I adopted the following sentiments, concerning the two churches, and the concern

which we have, at present, with the old dispensation. The Abrahamic church was preparatory to, and typical of, the Christian. The constitution was radically different; but it was, nevertheless, wisely adapted to answer the ends which God had in view. Natural descent or purchase was sufficient to introduce a person into this church; but still it appears, that, in every age, there were some who were truly pious; who embraced the gospel promise made to Abraham, before the covenant of circumcision was instituted; who also looked beyond the literal meaning of the requirements and promises, contained in that covenant, to the glorious things typified thereby, and thus exercised true faith in the coming Messiah, and in a better country, that is, the heavenly. When the Messiah appeared, this preparatory and typical system, having answered its end, was destined to cease; and the Lord Jesus set up his kingdom on earth, the gospel church, composed of such only as repent and believe, or rather give credible evidence of these gracious exercises. The bar of separation between the Jews and the rest of the world was removed; thenceforth, none were to plead, that they had Abraham for their father; none were to rest in the covenant of circumcision, assured that if they did, Christ would profit them nothing; but it was distinctly declared, that thenceforth, there was neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, but all were one in Christ (Gal. iii. 28).

But whereas the Abrahamic system was typical of the Christian, so the spiritual meaning of the requirements and promises still remains in force.

Thus, by looking beyond the letter, and regarding the spiritual import, according to the example of the pious Jews, a great part of the Old Testament is still applicable to us, though the New Testament is emphatically the Christian's law book. The natural seed of Abraham typifies the spiritual seed. The land of Canaan typifies the heavenly land. External circumcision typifies the circumcision of the heart, a circumcision made without hands, that is, the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, even the circumcision of Christ (Col. ii. 11). Believers, therefore, may embrace the promise of Canaan, in its spiritual application, as made to themselves, the spiritual seed, who have received the spiritual circumcision. Hence, also, all the devotional parts of the Old Testament, particularly the Psalms of David, the modern believer can make his own, adopting the language, as the genuine expressions of his own devout feelings.

In the same way are to be explained all the New Testament allusions to the ancient dispensation. When, for instance, the apostle says, 'If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise' (Gal. iii. 29), we are to understand, not Abraham's natural seed, surely, but his spiritual seed, those who by faith are assimilated to him, and thus become his children; not heirs of the land of Canaan, in the literal acceptation of the words, but heirs of the blessing of justification by faith, concerning which the apostle had been discoursing, and consequently, of the spiritual Canaan, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.

I cannot describe to you, dear brethren, the light and satisfaction, which I obtained, in taking this view of the matter, in considering the two churches distinct, and in classing my ideas of each in their proper place. I became possessed of a key, that unlocked many a difficulty, which had long perplexed me. And the more I read the Bible, the more clearly I saw, that this was the true system therein revealed.

But while I obtained light and satisfaction on one side, I was plunged in difficulty and distress on the other. If, thought I, this system is the true one, if the Christian church is not a continuation of the Jewish, if the covenant of circumcision is not precisely the covenant in which Christians now stand, the whole foundation of Pedobaptism is gone; there is no remaining ground for the administration of any church ordinance, to the children and domestics of professors; and it follows inevitably, that I, who was christened in infancy, on the faith of my parents, have never yet received Christian baptism. Must I, then, forsake my parents, the church with which I stand connected, the society under whose patronage I have come out, the companions of my missionary undertaking? Must I forfeit the good opinion of all my friends in my native land, occasioning grief to some, and provoking others to anger, and be regarded henceforth, by all my former dear acquaintance, as a weak, despicable Baptist, who has not sense enough to comprehend the connection between the Abrahamic and the Christian systems? All this was mortifying; it was hard to flesh and blood. But I thought again — It is better to be

guided by the opinion of Christ, who is the truth, than by the opinion of men, however good, whom I know to be in an error. The praise of Christ is better than the praise of men. Let me cleave to Christ at all events, and prefer his favor above my chief joy.

There was another thing which greatly contributed, just at this time, to drive me to an extremity. I knew that I had been sprinkled in infancy, and that this had been deemed baptism. But throughout the whole New Testament, I could find nothing, that looked like sprinkling, in connection with the ordinance of baptism. It appeared to me, that if a plain person should, without any previous information on the subject, read through the New Testament, he would never get the idea, that baptism consisted in sprinkling. He would find, that baptism in all cases particularly described was administered in rivers, and that the parties are represented, as going down into the water, and coming up out of the water, which they would not have been so foolish as to do for the purpose of sprinkling.

In regard to the word itself, which is translated baptism, a very little search convinced me that its plain, appropriate meaning was immersion or dipping; and though I read extensively on the subject, I could not find that any learned Pedobaptist had ever been able to produce an instance, from any Greek writer, in which it meant sprinkling, or any thing but immersion, except in some figurative applications, which could not be fairly brought into question. The Rev. Professor Campbell, D. D. of Scotland, the most learned Greek scholar and bibical critic of

modern times, has the candor to declare, (though he was no Baptist, and therefore, not to be suspected of partiality to the Baptist system,) that the word was never, so far as he knew, employed in the sense of sprinkling, in any use, sacred or classical. (See Note on Matt. iii. 11.)

But as my limits will not permit me to enter further into detail, on this part of the subject, I must beg leave to refer you to my Sermon, a copy of which will accompany this letter. Suffice it to say, that whereas a consideration of the nature of the church convinced me, that I had never received Christian baptism, so a consideration of the nature of baptism convinced me that I had never been baptized at all, nothing being baptism but immersion.

Reduced to this extremity, what, dear brethren, could I do? I saw, that, in a double sense, I was unbaptized, and I felt the command of Christ press on my conscience. Now if I quieted my conscience in regard to my own personal baptism, and concluded, that on account of my peculiar circumstances, it was best to consult my own convenience, rather than the command of Christ, still the question would return, with redoubled force, — How am I to treat the children and domestics of converted heathen? This was the beginning of all my difficulties, and this, on Pedobaptist principles, I could not resolve, by the Bible, or by any books that I consulted.

In order that you may feel the trying situation, in which I was placed, I beg you to make the case your own, particularly in regard to this one point, the treatment of the families of believers. You may thus be brought to feel the gripe of this Gordian

knot, as I have felt it. It is true, you have not the prospect of converted heathen and their families to trouble you; yet permit me to submit the case of your own families. In what light do you consider and treat them? Do you strictly comply with the terms of the Abrahamic covenant? Does your conduct perfectly accord with the Abrahamic system? Do you baptize (if baptism is in the place of circumcision) your male children, and those only, on the eighth day after their birth? Do you baptize your male domestics, and if you had slaves, would you have them also baptized? Still further, — Do you consider your baptized children and servants, members of the church, as circumcised Jewish children and servants were members of the Jewish church? Do you acknowledge their right to the Lord's supper, as soon at least, as they are capable; and do you feel your own obligations to require their attendance, and to discipline and exclude them, if they do not attend? Circumcision was the initiating ordinance of the Abrahamic or Jewish church; baptism has been regarded, in every age, and by all parties, as the initiating ordinance of the Christian church. Baptized persons are, therefore, members of the church. And if so, is it not wrong and dangerous to treat them, as if they were not? I need not inform you, that among yourselves, and among all the Congregational churches in New England, children and servants, who were baptized on account of the head of their family, are considered no more members of the church, than before — no more members of the church, than others, that have not been baptized. They are, in fact, consid-

ered and treated, as out of the church altogether, and as having no right to any further church privilege, until they give evidence of possessing religion, and make a personal public profession. Do you not hesitate, my brethren, at pursuing a course so anti-Abrahamic, so unscriptural? How can you plead the promise made to Abraham, when you so flagrantly violate the covenant, in which they are contained, and depart from the course divinely prescribed in his family, and in subsequent generations? But on the other hand, if you adopt and practise the Abrahamic system, you will inevitably confound the church and the world; you will receive into the church multitudes who are destitute of those qualifications, which are represented, in the New Testament, as requisite to constitute a member of the kingdom which Christ set up; you will ultimately establish a national religion; and this will be as contrary to the system laid down in the New Testament, as your present system is to the Abrahamic.

Brethren and Fathers, I have now given you a slight sketch of the difficulties, in which I became involved, while contemplating my missionary work, and which forced me at last, to adopt the Baptist system as alone consistent and scriptural. If I have done wrong herein, I shall be very grateful to any one, who will point out my error, — who will inform me what course I could have taken to extricate myself out of my difficulties, without becoming a Baptist. And in order to facilitate the matter, I beg leave to state the several points, on which I must obtain good satisfaction, or remain as I am.

1. Does it appear from the New Testament, that the unconverted children and servants of believers are members of the church of Christ according to the terms of the Abrahamic covenant? If this could be proved, it would go far towards proving, that the Christian church is a continuation of the Jewish; but if this cannot be proved, it appears to me, that no little incidental similarities are sufficient to establish the point.

2. If the children and servants of believers are members of the church, by virtue of belonging to the families of professors, ought they not, after being initiated into the church by baptism, to be considered and treated as members? Ought they not to be considered members of the Christian church, in the same manner, as the circumcised children and servants of the Jews were members of the Jewish church, and similarly entitled to the privileges and discipline of the church? And is it right or consistent to class them with aliens, until they come forward and join the church, to which it would seem, by the supposition, they had always belonged?

3. If the children and servants of believers are not real members of the church, by what right is one of the ordinances of the church, yea, even the initiating ordinance, administered to them? Do we discover any intimation, in the Old Testament, or the New, of any persons, who, not belonging to any church whatever, were yet entitled to the privileges of a church, and particularly to the ordinance of initiation, they being no more members of the church after they were initiated into it and acknowledged members, than others who were never thus

initiated? And if a person should venture to maintain such a position, on any other subject than that of Pedobaptism, would not the soundness of his intellect be justly suspected?

4. If the children and servants of believers are not entitled to the ordinance of baptism, must not those who have been baptized, on the faith of their parents or masters, necessarily regard their baptism as a nullity, and consider themselves, of course, in an unbaptized state? And when such persons believe in Christ, and hope that they have received divine grace, how can they refrain from obeying the express command of their Lord and Master?

Submitting these questions, dear Brethren, to your candid and impartial consideration, I take my leave. You will not, I hope, be displeased with any expressions in my letter, that may seem to bear hard on the system which you profess. Perhaps there are some such expressions. I have found it impossible to avoid them all, in stating my difficulties in their full force. And the same reasons which induced me to take up my pen at first, made me unwilling to soften and smooth those difficulties, through fear of giving offence. I have been sensible, that my change of sentiment would give much pain to many whom I loved and respected, to the members of the church I am now addressing, and to my honored father, your pastor. This reflection was the greatest trial attending my baptism. It was natural for me, therefore, to be desirous of showing you clearly the extremity to which I was reduced, and the potency of those arguments which constrained me to become a Baptist; hoping that

you would, by that means, be led to sympathize with me, in the exercises of mind that I have experienced, and be willing to admit, that my conduct has not been the result of momentary caprice, or the still more reprehensible effect of interested and sinister motives. I solemnly profess to have done this thing from a single regard to truth and duty. I have not altered my sentiments on any point of doctrine, or Christian experience. My heart tells me, dear brethren, that I am still one with you, though we differ on the subject of baptism. May every blessing, temporal and spiritual, rest on you and on your children.

May the God of truth lead you and me into all the truth; and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, is the prayer of your affectionate brother,

ADONIRAM JUDSON, JUN.

RANGOON, *August* 20, 1817.

AN ADDRESS

ON THE

MODE OF BAPTIZING.

THERE is satisfactory evidence, that believers' baptism constituted a part of primitive christianity in the British isles. But in subsequent ages, it became extinct, being superseded by the baptism of infants. Immersion, however, maintained its ground, until the middle of the seventeenth century, when the Westminster Assembly of Divines voted, by a majority of one, that immersion and sprinkling were indifferent. Previously to that period, the Baptists had formed churches in different parts of the country; and having always seen infants, when baptized, taken in the hands of the administrator, and laid under water, in the baptismal font, and not having much, if any, communication with the Baptists on the continent, they thought, of course, that a candidate for baptism, though a grown person, should be treated in the same manner, and laid backwards under the water. They were probably confirmed in this idea, by the phrase, 'buried in baptism.' The consequence has been, that all the Baptists in the

world, who have sprung from the English Baptists, have practised the backward posture.

But from the beginning, it was not so. In the apostolic times, the administrator placed his right hand on the head of the candidate, who then, under the pressure of the administrator's hand, bowed forward, aided by that genuflection, which instinctively comes to one's aid, when attempting to bow in that position, until his head was submerged, and then rose by his own effort. This appears from the figures sculptured in bronze and mosaic work, on the walls of the ancient baptisteries of Italy and Constantinople. Those figures represent John the Baptist leaning towards the river; his right hand on the head of the Saviour, as if pressing him down into the water; while the Saviour is about to bow down under the pressure of the hand of John.

The same is evident from the practice of the Greeks, the Armenians, and all the Oriental churches, who have not, like the Christians of countries once overspread with the Roman Catholic heresy, exchanged immersion for sprinkling. All those Oriental churches practise immersion to the present day, and regard no other application of water as valid baptism. And in the case of adults, they uniformly baptize by bowing forward under the water. Such cases not unfrequently occur, though pedobaptism has been long prevalent; for among the Jewish and Mahometan population of those countries, there are occasional converts to the Christian faith. The primitive mode of baptizing was preserved among the Waldenses and Albigenses also, as appears

from the present practice of the German Baptists in the state of Pennsylvania and other parts of the United States. The eastern churches have, it is true, introduced trine immersion, and kneeling, and pouring on water, before or after immersion, and anointing with oil, and other adventitious ceremonies, by which the simplicity of the primitive mode has been marred, and its glory tarnished; but still their testimony in favor of immersion and the forward posture remains unimpaired.

The forward posture, as represented on the walls of ancient baptisteries, and practised by the greater part of christendom to the present day, is further confirmed by sundry notices in ancient authors now extant. One of the most pertinent is that of Tertullian, in the beginning of the third century, who says, 'the Christians of his time were baptized by bowing down, with great simplicity, without pomp or many words.'

It does not seem, that the ancient Christians, and those who have practised the forward posture in subsequent ages, thought that they failed of reaching the full import of the phrase, 'buried in baptism,' though the common mode of burial is by placing the body in a supine posture: As in the quaint saying, that parables are not to be made to run upon all fours, so it is evident, that when a thing is completely covered up in the ground, it is buried, whatever the precise posture may be: It is evident, that if the forward posture in baptism obtained in the apostolic times, the apostle would have used the same figure and said, 'buried in baptism.'

It must not be intimated, that the present mode

in Great Britain and the United States is, at all, rude or indecorous. It is too prevalent and too highly patronized to be regarded in that light. But when orientals are first informed of our mode, they are filled with great surprise; and when they come to understand it, which they are slow to do, they cannot refrain from smiling, and, not unfrequently, involuntary laughter. When asked, however, whether it is not valid baptism, they will stop a moment, as if much amused with the oddity of the idea; but on second thought, will candidly admit, — 'yes, it is certainly valid baptism. If they are put under water, they are certainly baptized; but it is so very, very curious.'

It is the peculiar privilege of the Baptists, to have defended, in every age, the initiatory ordinance of the Christian church, and that, on the simple ground, that so far as the mode is concerned, immersion, however administered, and that alone is valid baptism. Other appendages may have occasionally been added; but they are not regarded as essential. Whether baptism is performed in a baptistery, in a river, or in the sea; whether the candidate be more or less clothed; whether he be immersed forward or backward, if he be immersed, he is baptized. There may be diversity of tastes and preferences; but the fundamental principle remains untouched. The mode generally practised in this country is unquestionably valid and proper. It has also the great advantage of being sustained by prevailing usage. As, however, the evidence is decidedly in favor of the position, that the Lord Jesus was bap-

tized by bowing forward under the hand of John; and as some individuals may prefer following, as nearly as possible, the footsteps of their Lord, I am sure, that all true Baptists will candidly and affectionately respond. We give others the same liberty which we claim for ourselves; let them be gratified.

UTICA, *June* 7, 1846.

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From the Professors in Yale College.

The undersigned consider the Rev. L. COLEMAN's work on the Apostolical and Primitive Church, as being, in general, correct in sentiment, judicious in the exposition of the Scriptures, and both copious and fair in citations from the early ecclesiastical writers. As a book of reference it possesses great value; and, we think, it might be used advantageously as a text-book in lectures to theological students.

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I need not say that the perusal of your work has very highly gratified me, as it must have done numbers besides. Its well digested and rightly applied learning, catholic spirit, and comprehensive plan, cannot fail to place it among standard works in its particular department, and to render it subservient to the final triumph of scriptural Christianity. I shall certainly make it a class book on the subject on which it treats.

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Second Thousand.

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